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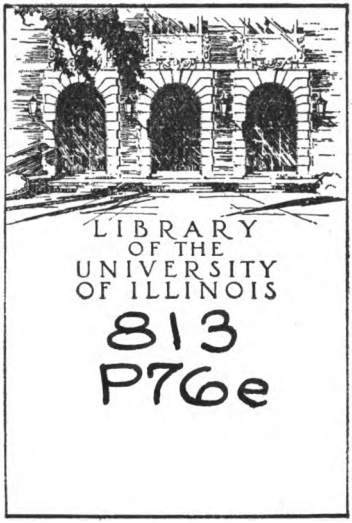
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THE ENEMY

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THE ENEMY

Novelized from the Play

BY

CHANNING POLLOCK

GROSSET & DUNLAP
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THE ENEMY

CHAPTER ONE

NUMBER Eight . . . Hahngasse . . . Vienna. . . .

Morning sunlight slanted across the red brick building, lending an evanescent delicacy and charm to its stolid solidity. A stone's throw away the traffic hummed along one of the great, historic Ringstrasse. But here at the moment Carl Behrend mounted the steps there was a little pool of warm, golden silence, broken by the laughter of children playing in the street.

People passed, on their way to service in the Stephanskirche, couples, whole families, the reluctant younger generation dragging at the parental hands, casting longing glances at the more fortunate youngsters who, untrammeled by Sunday clothes, ran bare-headed in the June wind. Carl, pausing, watched the procession for a moment, his facile, sensitive poet's emotions stirred, as always, by the potential drama of the passers-by. Standing there, his slight, supple figure seemed to express physically his spiritual vitality, his mental tensity, as if the whole man, body, mind and heart, were eternally braced against alternate onslaughts of rapture and despair.

For a moment then, he watched the passing strangers, each with his little history he thought, his joy or sorrow

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or his secret terror, each with his love. People—how wonderful they are! That peasant girl there, with her strong body and her scrubbed, Sunday face, her roughened hands; that little woman over the way, race in every line, tiny feet treading the pavements as if they were paths of stardust and moon-ivory; that old, white-bearded man with his grandchild walking beside him—how wonderful to be part of them, to rejoice with their happiness, to grieve with their distress, to stand here, unknown and unknowing, their brother!

His clear eyes clouded suddenly. A man, crossing the street, had lifted a negligent hand to him. A friend of his father; what was his name, Kleinschmidt?

The man passed by but the sunlight had dimmed for Carl. He thought of the scene at the breakfast table with his father; he remembered his father's words, heavy as paving blocks, bitter as aloes:

"Scribbler! Do-nothing! Before heaven, that a son of mine should live in the inkpot! Leave this futility to women, Carl, it's not a man's work—not a real man's!"

Carl Behrend turned from the bright spectacle of the quiet Sunday streets and hurried into the house that was labeled Number Eight. Up the two flights of marble stairs he went, as if his father's remembered words were at his heels, pursuing him, as if he must reach safety; up the flights to which the sun never penetrated, but not stumbling, not once touching the iron railing, so familiar were the stairs to him, the stairs that led to warmth, to light, to safety—and to Pauli!

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Arrived, he was breathless, his hand raised to knock —a double knock. Carl never rang at the door of Dr. Arndt's apartment. Pauli knew his knock, it was a little signal between them.

The door opened. For the fraction of a second he stood there, his handsome, mobile face still dark with unhappy memories, with rebellion; then:

"Pauli!" cried Carl Behrend.

She faced him, laughing a little, her slim figure shrouded in an embroidered apron, her sunny hair dancing about her face. Such a little thing, fragile, exquisitely deft and sure in all her motions. He had known her since their childhood, he saw her every day of his life—but now and again, as at this moment, he came upon her with a shock of surprise, as if he had never seen her before, had never known how dear she was, how inexpressibly dear. . . .

"Carl—you're early!"

"Does it matter?"

"Goose! Come in . . . why are you standing there in the hall? Father's not in yet, it will be two hours before the others come——"

She took his hand in her small, strong hand and pulled him over the sill. See, now he was safe, safe from the wounds life was always dealing him, safe from his lack of confidence in himself, safe from those self-created terrors which haunt the immensely significant, the adventurous days of the sensitive.

He allowed her to take possession of him, to draw him into the room that was a homely sanctuary. He loved it, the shabby much-trodden carpet, the nonde-

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script furniture, the walls, red denim above a dark wood wainscoting. He loved it because it was a room with a soul, it was his friend.

Pauli said, touching his sleeve:

"I haven't said—'Happy Birthday!'"

"You needn't," he answered, sitting down in the chair that was almost exclusively "his"; an armchair upholstered in worn tapestry. "And before you ask me the obvious question, I don't feel particularly older."

Pauli picked up some embroidery, a bit of colorful cross-stitch, and turned the ring over, hunted for a needle, found it and set to work. Her hands were never idle, they were hands of service. She said:

"Well—twenty-four—that's a great age, isn't it? Remember, I'll catch up with you in eleven days——"

"Where's Bruce?"

"Not in either. He went out early this morning: said he had to have exercise."

Carl groaned dismally.

"These English! I haven't told you what he did to me last week, when we walked in the Prater—wanted to walk to the Third Coffee House—the *third*, mind you! I said to him, 'Bruce, old son, it's a hundred miles, more or less.' But he wouldn't listen, he got me as far as the Second before he took pity on me—he and his fresh air!"

"Poor Carl," said Pauli, laughing; "but Bruce says a doctor must set a good example to his patients——"

"I'm not his patient," Carl argued. "And—well, I

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suppose he is a doctor. But such a very new one, Pauli, a baby of a doctor!"

He nodded across the room toward the table from which Pauli had taken her sewing. Draped with a little English flag the picture of their friend stood in the place of honor. Carl said, his face forgetting laughter and remembering sorrow, in the way it had, "We'll miss him when he goes."

"Yes," said Pauli. "Four years—living here—one of us."

"Pauli?"

"Yes?"

"I've changed the ending of my play."

"Carl—why?"

"Because—oh, it seems better. It came to me—in the night—as clear cut as if I had it there in print before me. It seemed—oh, right and fine and logical, as I woke in the darkness and thought of it. Now, I don't know—after one gets it down on paper—it's all so different!"

Pauli Arndt smiled, very tenderly. These moods of Carl's—no middle ground there—heights and depths, a see-saw of a person. Since he had come to her, that long-ago day, almost stammering in his excitement, almost a madman in his first creative frenzy, with the initial dream of his play—his *great* play—she had wept and laughed with him, trembled and exulted, comforted and reassured—had gone with him every step of the difficult, the uneven way. He wrote, it seemed to her, out of his very heart's blood;

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he was more than a playwright, he *was* his play!

"Have you it here? Will you read it to me?"

He nodded, drew the inky, crumpled sheets from an inner pocket, bent his blond head over them, his slender, fine hands almost awkward, almost fumbling in his eagerness. Pauli's eyes, resting on that bowed head, were luminous with the sacrificial, splendid pain of love. What a boy he was! A little, little boy—and hers—always hers! He didn't remember, not as she remembered every hour of the day. He took it for granted as little boys do, as grown-up boys must. . . . But Pauli didn't mind. Carl—was Carl. Enough for her. Happiness pressed down and brimming over!

He started to read, his voice low at first, a little self-conscious, a little hurried, then gaining strength as he forgot himself in the lines. Pauli listened—but she was far from hearing. Although she sat there so quietly, her hands employed with her embroidery, her little face alert, her spirit was enfolding him in its invisible arms, holding him close, safe from harm, safe from disaster.

He had finished reading. He got to his feet, stood there, always with that tense, braced look, a look of wings, and said:

"You see! You see—Pauli?" His voice broke, his eyes sought hers with something of anxiety, even of anger.

"You don't? It means nothing to you? You haven't a word to say? Pauli—I'll tear it up——"

He tossed the sheets to the table—turned, moody

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and estranged, his altered face toward her, his eyes hurt, their gayety submerged.

"You don't care, you don't even listen!"

"Oh, Carl," she told him, her heart between laughter and tears, "how can you say that? I do care; but—perhaps I didn't listen—I was thinking——"

"Didn't listen!" he said, hardly believing his ears, scarcely crediting the admission of his own accusation. "Why—Pauli——"

"Forgive me——"

He smiled, a very little, and Pauli begged:

"And to prove it—read it again. No, don't read it Carl—I know very well that you've got it by heart—say it for me—act it out, each character in turn as you did last time——"

"That was foolishness!"

"No! Please! Or I'll think you haven't forgiven."

"Very well then—I'll go back a little, in the action—you'll understand better."

The gloom gone, his head up, he strode about the room, gesturing a little, his voice resonant, with a certain haunting, touching timbre in it. Pauli listened, her heart in her eyes—beautiful eyes, faithful heart!

Oh, she was forgetting again! What would Carl think of her!

He came toward her, sat down once more, leaned across the intervening space. His voice was young, eager.

"Then the old man says, 'I know all this can't have been for nothing.' As he says it, we hear the child soldiers—the real soldiers of to-morrow—giving him

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the lie. In the shadows men stare at each other—aghast; and then suddenly, the sun reappears, streaming through that window here, as it does this morning. I—I took this room for a pattern of course, the room where I've known so much happiness, Pauli——"

If only he'd looked at her then!

She said, very low:

"Yes, this room, this *dear* room. And Pauli in it—not the real Pauli, not me, commonplace, just myself, but your Pauli of the play, splendid, gallant——"

He said, not seeming to have heard her:

"In the sunlight Pauli stands. Stands in the full glory. From across the courtyard comes the menacing roll of drums, but Pauli—exalted—prophetic—only lifts her head higher, looking *past* to-morrow into a new day—and in a ringing voice, lyrical and unearthly, cries——"

He broke off abruptly. From the dining room there had come a rush of heavy feet and a round, red, laughing face balanced on a thick neck appeared around the dining-room doors; and a voice said in mock despair:

"Fräulein, the onions!"

Pauli gave a little gasp and Carl flung himself back in his chair. Together they stared for a second as the Arndt's stocky Bohemian maid-of-all-work advanced into the room, twisting her big red hands under her apron. Then Pauli, half sighing, half laughing, wholly bewildered by the sudden transition from the sublime to the ridiculous, asked:

"What on earth is it, Baruska?"

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Baruska grinned, showing every tooth in her empty head. She repeated, glancing slyly at Carl who still regarded her with a frown:

"No onions—for the goose!"

Pauli laughed outright. After a minute Carl caught the infection—he struck his knee with his fist and shouted, as wholeheartedly as any ten-year-old. Baruska laughed, too, for no particular reason other than the happy fact that laughter is contagious. Mr. Carl—well, all the world knew that Mr. Carl's head was in the clouds; not like his fine father, his imposing father, whose feet were on the earth. What in the world were they laughing over, these two?

"Baruska; I gave them to you," said Pauli, at last, shaking her head at the maid. Baruska looked as if her mistress had remarked, carelessly, "Yesterday I presented you with the Crown Jewels." Her jaws gaped slowly and she asked, incredulously:

"Fräulein; when?"

"Yesterday, silly—when I came from market!"

The jaw snapped shut. Baruska rapped herself on the head, shook the assaulted member from side to side as if to hear her brains rattle, and remarked, deeply:

"Woodenhead! I'll look again!" and departed, as heavily as she had come.

Pauli turned to Carl when they were alone again. Her clear, pale skin was flushed with her laughter, her eyes shone, but her voice was tenderly regretful as she said, making a little quiet gesture with the hand which still held the bit of embroidery:

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"Poor Carl—just as you reached the fine moment!"

Carl laughed again, shortly, but without bitterness. He got up, went to the table, gathered up his manuscript and put it into his pocket again. He touched himself lightly on the breast and answered her:

"That's life! Just as one reaches the fine moment—like dropping down a cliff—into a bed of nettles . . . Pauli—" his face grew a little stern with anxiety, his voice implored her—"Pauli, tell me the truth—you're always trying to spare me—do you really think that a fine moment?"

She looked up at him. He had come closer, towered over her, his chin outthrust, eager, compelling. she answered him out of the great sincerity which was native to her:

"Yes, Carl——"

He sat down again. His hands were clasped between his knees, his eyes fixed on them. He said, slowly:

"Do you know what started me thinking along just those lines, what suggested the changes? Kurt."

"Kurt?"

"Yes, little Kurt, across the hall, always asking for a drum. Then it came to me. You see the correlation? Oh, I want you so to see that all the characters in my play are just—us; nice little people caught up in a whirlwind of hate—puzzled—not knowing why; not knowing toward what they are going—impelled—then—dashed to pieces—thinking with the fragments—coming clear with their battered, beaten selves. You get that, Pauli, don't you. Just that?"

She looked at him, reflecting, trying to see with his

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envisioned eyes, to hear with his acutely sensitive ears, to think with his dreamer's mind. She answered, slowly, groping to follow him:

"Yes. Nice little people—oh, I *like* that, Carl! But why—you've never told me, you know, why do you call them 'The Enemy'?"

His hands unclasped—fell lax. He stared at her a second, his face almost stupid with disappointment. He answered:

"But I *don't,* Pauli. Oh, can't you see?—not them. The enemy is hate, the real enemy. Haven't I made that clear, Pauli? Why, it's the whole thing—*haven't* I made you see?"

Her heart hurt her. She had failed him. She loved him, she loved him, and she had failed him. She stammered:

"Yes—yes . . . *only*——"

"Only, I haven't! Oh, my God, it's no good! It's no good—I'll burn it. I knew it missed the mark—an hour after I'd finished it——"

Pauli rose. She went to him, put her hand on his shoulder.

"Carl—don't be silly! Don't even think such a thing. I do see now. If I didn't, just for a little, little moment, it's because I'm stupid. You shouldn't expect wise criticism from me, Carl—just humdrum Pauli— Look; look at the people who believe in you —father, Bruce—and I know too. Oh, I do, Carl—it was just that I was stupid!"

He put his hand up, touched hers with affection, hardly thinking of her, yet knowing it was good and

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right that she should stand near him, thus, her hand on his shoulder, her light, strong hand, warm, caressing. He said:

"Forgive me. What a weathercock I am! But I am raw, I tell you—supersensitive. Father—we had another scene to-day. When he isn't storming at me he's laughing at me. That's worse than the other—that ridicule, heavy as lead. But—you can't understand about the play. It's like—a—a child—as if someone made fun of your child. You—you close your eyes to the child's defects—it's crippling even—it's—beautiful to you—your own; and then—people laugh——"

"Pauli's eyes, blue as larkspur, clear as spring water, closed for a moment. Standing there, her hand still on his shoulder she said:

"Yes; I understand that. Your child. Created of you——"

He broke in, on her dream:

"I wish I'd thought of the new ending before I sent the play off to Bergman. If it comes back——"

Her hand closed harder on the stuff of his coat. He turned, looked up at her, wrung by a sudden suspicion.

"Pauli—tell me—it—it *hasn't* come back?"

She looked down at him, quietly—Pauli, who never lied. Yet she lied now, out of her love, her pity, her longing to keep him safe:

"No; it hasn't come back——"

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CHAPTER TWO

WITH an emotion of gratitude, of relief, Pauli saw—and heard—the reappearance of Baruska. She took her hand from Carl's shoulder, took her eyes from his asking eyes, and moved a step or two away. Baruska said, grinning amiably:

"I've found the onions, after all—are you going to set the table, Fraülein?"

Pauli started.

"Yes; it is that late then? I'll come presently."

"How many people?" Baruska asked, from the open dining-room doors.

Pauli counted on her fingers, her blond brows bent, charmingly.

"The three of us who live here—father, Mr. Gordon, myself—and the one who almost does"—she turned the hand toward Carl, and Baruska laughed—"and his father, Mr. Behrend, and Mitzi and Fritzi Winckleman from across the hall—that's seven; and little Kurt! Call it seven and a half, Baruska."

She glanced at Carl. Carl had taken out his manuscript sheets again and was poring over them. Pauli crossed to the maid, and whispered, "I'll put the candles on the birthday cake, later——"

Baruska nodded, her smile increasing in length and width. She said, wisely:

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"Twenty-four candles! And then—some day—" she pointed from Pauli to Carl, and ticked off on her thick fingers—"one little candle—two little candles——"

"Hush!" Pauli went rosy red, but she smiled. She gave the woman a slight, friendly push. "Stupid! Go back to the kitchen!"

Baruska, her arms akimbo, her round head thrown back, her full throat vibrating to the deep, noisy, elemental laughter of the peasant, retreated through the dining-room into the kitchen. Carl looked up from his sheets of inky, cheap paper. He said, as if continuing an uninterrupted conversation:

"Just now, Pauli, why did you say 'only'?"

Pauli, caught back from her birthday candles, frowned thoughtfully. Her face cleared, she remembered. He had asked, "Haven't I made you see?" and she had answered him, "Yes—only—" She sighed a little. Carl never let things pass. He always wanted to know why. And Pauli wasn't clever at explanations. Carl—dear Carl—always trying to take people apart to see the wheels go 'round—little, curious, destructive boy! No not destructive—*constructive.*

"I was thinking," she answered, finally, "that when the play's produced——"

Carl made a strange, strangled sound in his throat. He said, *"When!"* in the tone of a child who is asked to wait until next Christmas—next Christmas! a million years away!

Pauli smiled a little. She said, maternally:

"Yes, when. Soon, it will be, Carl, never doubt

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that. But all I meant was everybody will say you're pro-English. Most of us aren't taught to think of the English as 'nice little people' you know."

"Taught! Taught! What does that mean? The very point I'm trying to make is that they're exactly like us—there isn't any real difference between peoples, you know. Fancy hating a country of Bruce Gordon's!"

Pauli looked over at the picture draped with the little English flag. She said:

"Oh—Bruce!"

"Well; he isn't unique, is he? There must be a good many like him among forty million people," Carl argued. "Think of all the nonsense we believe of other nations—and of the nonsense they believe about us. Hate is a manufactured product, Pauli! That's a commonplace; but so few of us see the commonplace, and it has to be repeated so often. Oh, Pauli, *how* I wish I had a typewriter."

He walked nearer to her, as she stood where Baruska had left her. There was a yearning in his tone which seemed out of all proportion, as he repeated, wistfully: "A typewriter!"

Pauli smiled.

"I've heard you say that before, Carl."

"Yes; and shall again, no doubt. . . . I—I almost dared ask father for one, this morning. My birthday, you know. But before I could frame the sentence in my mind I saw how ridiculous, how futile it would be. Imagine him encouraging me by that much! Think of it, Pauli; here I am—a grown man—without the

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means to buy a typewriter! Isn't it pitiful—and laughable? Then, this morning—another scene. I'm so tired of them, tired of defending myself, tired of explaining—it's like talking in Greek—he can't understand—or won't. And then, sometimes I think over all he says—and wonder if he's right."

"I've heard you say that before, too," remarked Pauli, quietly.

"Yes, but—see here, Pauli; I've 'scribbled,' as father calls it, since my army service—and never sold a sentence. No, not a comma. Think how many bushels of grain father's sold in that time. No wonder he's disgusted, no wonder he won't give me a crown. No wonder he begrudges even board and lodging——"

"Oh, no!"

"Yes, he does. Pauli, if the play comes back, I'll never write another line!"

"Carl, Carl! How often have you said that, too!"

"Yes; it's idiotic—and untrue. I'll never quit—not while there's life in my body. Never; I'll give up anything, everything to keep on writing—I'll give up what I want most——"

His voice halted, slurred, came to a full stop. He hadn't meant to say it. Had she understood? Had she realized all that he was implying—that he'd give her up too, for his work, if need be? He'd never ask her to marry him—there had been no demonstration between them, no tearing apart of the petals of the rose, no shopworn exchange of clasp and kiss. But she knew! And he knew! And it was—silently but deeply—understood that one day—some day—they

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two . . . And now, what had he said? That he must relinquish even that unspoken dream. Had she understood? Understood that he couldn't have her suffer poverty and failure with him?

His eyes, pleading for comprehension—frightened eyes—met hers. She looked at him quietly. She had understood. There was no reproach in her glance. She said, a little pale, but very steadily:

"Yes. You're right, Carl," and went from him into the dining room. Her throat hurt her, her eyes smarted. She busied herself with the things on the sideboard. Right? He was right. You couldn't harness a flame to domestic services, set it under a stove and bid it cook! You couldn't tame the wind, and cage the starlight. If—if things didn't go well—she'd make him see that she understood he must give her up. Until they were both old perhaps. Until he had won his laurels. Then he'd come back to her, tired and at peace, to put his head against the heart that would never cease to cherish him. . . .

He followed her. His next words came in a little rush of emotion:

"You believe in me, Pauli—and so does Bruce—and your father. No one else. Not even Fritzi and Mitzi. But then Fritzi's a journalist and superior to everyone I know!"

Pauli got out the silver and began to set the table. She had herself well in hand now. But—if only her throat didn't ache so—and back of her eyes!

"Carl—get me the blue plates, please!"

He didn't stir; he watched her as she moved lightly

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about the big, battered table. He said, brooding:

"If the play comes back—I put this address on it as usual—telephone, will you? And if father answers, just say, 'Tell Carl he left his rubbers.' "

Pauli laughed, gently. The ache—one didn't notice it so much, laughing. She said, moving around to him:

"Dear Carl—I've said that so often!"

"I know—but I can't bear having him learn. Oh, he recognizes that I'm a failure, right enough, but not —how many times!"

"If I keep on saying you left your rubbers he's bound to suspect. No living creature could have so many rubbers, Carl." She touched his arm, looked up into his eyes. "Now—please—the blue plates—I can't reach them——"

Carl went toward the china cupboard, reached up, turned and said:

"Well, father's always telling me about my lack of success—and if you talk long enough——"

"There'll be no dinner!" finished Pauli.

Carl laid a stack of white plates on the table before her. Pauli sighed, in mock despair.

"Color-blind? Are they blue?"

They laughed, and he returned the rejected crockery to the cupboard and reached again for the blue plates. Pauli watched him, tenderly. Such an abstracted baby, such a single-track mind!

The door into the living room opened softly. A young man entered, blonde, broad-shouldered, narrow in flank and hip; a young man who carried a heavy, awkward burden and whose white teeth were clamped

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down upon a peculiarly ancient and dishonorable pipe. An Englishman. . . .

Bruce Gordon tiptoed to the desk with his curious package. He peered into the next room, listened to the low murmur of absorbed conversation, grinned boyishly and removed the black coverings from his burden—a typewriter!

He sat down in an old easy-chair, crossed his legs and blew the cloud of pipe smoke in the direction of the dining room. He could see them both—and they—didn't know he was there. Carl's voice reached him, clearly:

"Where are the wine glasses?"

"There; but father and the others take beer."

"My father doesn't! Not he! He's bringing some wine along—told me to tell you."

"Bringing it—in his hands?"

Pauli's laugh was like wine, like sunlight, like trees blowing in the wind and birds singing. The eavesdropper smiled in sympathy.

"No; of course not! He's sending Jan with it. Father must have his beloved Karlowitzer, but he'll only carry it internally——"

Bruce chuckled. Carl was in a good mood then.

Pauli asked, over the minute crash of plates and silver:

"How is Jan? I haven't seen him for days."

"Just the same, a bundle of nerves under that stolid, good servant mask. He is a good servant, the best I ever had—and he's my friend——"

There was a little silence. Bruce rose and went to

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the new typewriter and surveyed it critically. Carl's voice reached him:

"Where's Bruce? Isn't it time he came?"

"Yes. Perhaps he did, and went to his room—to study."

The listener smiled, picked up from the desk the bit of sewing on which Pauli had been engaged. He raised it, with the embarrassed, naïve air of an Englishman in love, to his tanned cheek. He heard Carl say:

"Studying—after graduation?" And Pauli's laughing answer:

"Well, so he says. I think he tries to put off going back to England."

Bruce frowned, smiled again, laid back the sewing on the desk, took up a newspaper and sat down, puffing furiously.

"I think so too," said Carl with significance—a significance lost on Pauli, who answered him, innocently:

"Of course, he wants to see his mother and his people, but it won't be easy for him to say good-by to his friends here."

"No," Carl answered, quite without malice, but with even deeper significance. "Not easy—for Bruce, or his friends."

"Four years," said Pauli, "and all the old associations besides. Why, he's one of us—you remember that his father and mine were students together in Munich. Father's devoted to Bruce."

"Father?" asked Carl.

"I too. I'm very fond of him, aren't you?"

The newspaper rustled in the other room. Bruce

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was listening hard again—for Carl's answer. It came, wholeheartedly:

"Yes; he's a splendid fellow!"

The tanned, blonde skin flushed. Bruce dropped the newspaper, rapped out his pipe. He raised his voice, and called:

"I say—you two in there!"

"Bruce!"

Pauli and Carl appeared simultaneously in the doorway and stared at their friend. Pauli said:

"How long have you been there? We had no idea——"

"I know. But I tried to penetrate through your cloudlike absorption. You know Professor Muller told us that over-development of one organ means under-development of another. Is it because you two talk so much that you can't smell?"

"Thanks for the lecture, Doctor," said Carl, laughing; "just what does it mean?"

"I've been smoking like a locomotive!"

Pauli came into the room and lifted her father's pipe from the top of the bookcase. She said, scornfully:

"In a roundhouse always full of locomotives! I never get this room aired of the smoke in it! It's a permanent thing. One pipe more or less doesn't make any new impression, you know."

"As to that," said Carl, "what's the idea of playing hide-in-a-corner? Pauli thought you were studying."

"I was," said Bruce, lazily. "Mathematics! I was trying to figure out this neat little problem: If it

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takes one person ten minutes to set a table, how many hours does it take two persons?"

He had risen, stood there looking at them, careless and blonde and friendly. Carl shook a fist at him.

"Oh, shut up! Feeling comic this noon? What's the news, anyway?"

"None."

Pauli had seen the typewriter. She looked at Bruce eagerly and as he nodded her face broke into smiling. She looked at the unconscious Carl and raised her eyebrows at his blindness. She was on tip-toe with eagerness and unselfish pleasure.

Carl came toward his friend, looked carelessly at the newspaper Bruce had dropped to the floor.

"Of course. Reading yesterday's paper will never keep you in touch with the news, Bruce."

Bruce stooped to pick up the paper. He answered, smiling:

"I suppose so. I was looking over some stuff of Fritzi's—wondering why on earth things that seem silly when a man says them are almost impressive in print." He threw the newspaper on the desk and added, "Now, yesterday Fritzi said——"

His little trick had succeeded. Involuntarily, Carl's eyes had followed the newspaper. They widened. His mouth opened, shut, opened again to shout:

"There's—there's a *typewriter!*"

Paul laughed out and clapped her hands together; but Bruce, looking extremely puzzled asked:

"Where?"

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"But—there! On the desk! Where did it come from?"

Bruce glanced at Pauli and sighed patiently. He said, with exaggerated slowness:

"Dear old chap, typewriters don't come, you know. They don't walk upstairs and ring the bell and send in a card! Not they! I'm not much of a Sherlock, but from the evidence at hand I should deduce that someone brought the thing in——"

Carl looked from one to the other. He approached the little, squat, black beast of machine, regarded its shining white teeth. He asked:

"But—who?"

Pauli came close to him. She said, with mock exasperation:

"Idiot! Whose birthday is it—or were we all mistaken?"

The swift, clear color rose to Carl's face. He said, as hysterical as a child with delight, unbelief, with the sense of dreams come true:

"Pauli!"

She deliberately misunderstood him. She pointed, shook her little head, and corrected him:

"No; not Pauli—Bruce!"

Carl covered the few steps between himself and the young Englishman in one stride. He shook him in his eagerness.

"You didn't! You couldn't! How in the world did you know?"

Bruce detached himself gravely and began feeling his arm, tenderly.

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"Not so fast, son; you'll cripple me. How did I know? Oh, a little bird told me—no, a great bird, named Carl—a parrot of a Carl who has been going about from dawn to dusk, week in, week out, wailing, 'If *only* I had a typewriter!' "

Carl bent over the machine. He said:

"If father ever sees this he'll take an apoplexy! He'd call it leading me on the path of destruction. Anyway, it's mine! And an American make too!"

Bruce picked up a piece of paper from the desk. He said, soothingly:

"Of course. Let him try and take it. He'd have to send Jan to carry it away, and we'd fix Jan. Here, let me show you how the thing works."

Carl took the paper from his friend's hand.

"No, sir! I'll write the first words. What shall they be?"

" 'Thanks to Bruce?' " Pauli suggested.

Carl turned, flung out a hand, touched Bruce's shoulder.

"No; I've no words for that. He understands. But, see here; the first words written on my own typewriter are very important: I'll always remember them."

Pauli slipped her arm through Bruce's. She laughed up, he down, delighted at the success of the little conspiracy. Carl turned and saw them. His face darkened a little, as if a cloud had passed over his sun. He repeated, slowly, "I shall always remember."

"Try 'Many happy returns of the day—" began Bruce, laughing.

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"Hush; don't make fun. What shall it be, Pauli?"

But Pauli shook her head.

"I can't imagine. Oh, Carl; it's wonderful that you have it—the wrist watch I gave you is nothing in comparison to that——"

Carl held up his wrist with the watch strapped to it. He answered:

"Nothing? When you've given me all Eternity, here at my hand?"

"I'll give you a real gift," said Pauli, suddenly. "I'll type your play for you—I know how—and we'll send it to a manager——"

She stopped. She had forgotten. She looked across at Carl, half frightened, and he asked her:

"What do you mean? It's with a manager now, *isn't it*, Pauli?"

She pressed Bruce's arm warningly—she had been so foolish to arouse his suspicions—poor Carl. She said, hurriedly:

"Of course. I only meant—if——"

"If!" Carl repeated. He sat down before the typewriter, his happiness vanished, faced only by the terrible possibility of another failure. Pauli whispered to Bruce:

"Please—" and started toward the dining room. Bruce said, quietly:

"Well, I'll have to have a copy to take with me to London. I'd almost forgotten. But I know, rather well too, a producer—nice chap named Gaunt."

"You'll forget again," said Carl, sulky with suspicion.

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"I shan't. Word of honor. I'll take your play to Gaunt the very first day I'm in London. He'll want it, I know he will. He's a brilliant fellow——"

The clouds vanished. Carl jumped up from the chair and took his friend's hand. His face was jubilant. A producer in London! And Bruce had said he'd be sure to take the play!

"You and Pauli," said Carl, huskily, "my best friends—my good angels——"

"Oh, come! I don't fancy myself in wings and a pleasing smile," said Bruce, laughing. He thought: "Poor boy! What will become of him? These moods, these—well, tenses." He looked at Carl with the eye of the physician, the eye of the diagnostician. He thought further: "Life will play the devil with Carl." Aloud he said:

"No; I'm not your angel, Carl. I refuse the job. Now, Pauli might fit the bill——"

"Pauli," said Carl, in a strange voice.

The doorbell rang sharply.

"Oh—damn!" said Carl; "I suppose it's the Wincklemans."

Pauli ran to answer the bell, shrilling impatiently for the second time.

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CHAPTER THREE

PAULI opened the door. But not to the Winklemans, that jolly little couple across the hall. Beaming ponderously from the sill, Carl's father, August Behrend, confronted her; "the incomparably august Behrend," as Bruce, punning atrociously in his own language, called him. Pauli remembered this, inopportunely enough, and almost laughed as she greeted him.

"Oh, Mr. Behrend! How nice to see you! Please come in."

Mr. Behrend advanced impressively into the room. He was a big man, amply bechinned, a man whose upward pointing mustaches, whose blonde, coarse hair cut *en brosse,* whose light, restless eyes and heavy, practical hands all suggested vitality, energy, will power. His clothes were excellently cut, he wore too much—but good—jewelry. He looked what he was—successful, complacent, insensitive and domineering.

He patted Pauli on the shoulder.

"Little Pauli——"

His eyes roved over her in mild astonishment. . . . Pauli, recalling her apron, put back her hands to unfasten the strings. She said, blushing a little, furious at herself for caring:

"My apron! I—thought it was earlier—and I still had things to do in the kitchen——"

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Mr. Behrend beamed forgivingly upon her. His momentary agitation had vanished. He had thought to be received in festive garments—had he not donned his own? He looked with approval on the very simple, pretty little frock the removal of the apron revealed.

"Not at all—little housewife!" said he; and advanced further into the room, which seemed to shrink before him.

Carl had risen and was looking for something with which to cover the typewriter lest his father see it. As Pauli took off the apron Bruce made a long arm, took it from her, laid it over the machine just as Carl turned to receive his father's greeting, a greeting which was tinged with quite the correct amount of parental tolerance and patience:

"Ah, my boy——"

He shook hands with his son, a superfluous gesture, it would seem, considering the fact that they had parted only a few hours before. Yet somehow the elder Behrend managed to convey, and not too subtly, that he was bestowing a favor upon his boy with his hand, perhaps even a temporary pardon or, at any rate, an armistice.

Now, he turned to Bruce and greeted him with a stiff and grave formality. A sense of constraint was over the entire group.

Baruska darted in, breathless. It had occurred to her that she'd heard the bell—some time ago—preoccupied with her goose she'd conveniently allowed the summons to shrill. Now she was ready to answer it if the Fates had sent a patient visitor to the door.

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They had. Jan, Carl's servant, was there now, having made a slower progress because of the heavy burden he carried as well as the propriety demanded of his army training, which insisted that he walk a few steps behind his superiors. Jan had been detailed as Carl's "Bursche," or striker, during their military service. He still considered Carl his officer. There he stood now, a stocky blonde boy with a flashing, eager smile, clearing his throat respectfully to attract attention. Pauli greeted him in her friendly fashion and beckoned:

"Come in, Jan." She turned to Baruska,

"Take Jan into the kitchen, Baruska; unpack Mr. Behrend's Karlowizter and put the bottles on the sideboard. And tell the professor the guests are here. I heard him come in the side door some time ago, he must be in his room."

Baruska darted a bovinely coy look at Jan and led the way through the dining room. Pauli turned back to Mr. Behrend.

"Do let me have your hat, and find a comfortable chair——"

Behrend, who regarded the straight-backed chairs in the room with a sort of pious horror, sank into the easy-chair near the desk, at which the three young people exchanged glances of consternation. Behrend, stretching his legs luxuriously, and eyeing the room with patronage, remarked, largely:

"Thanks—I don't coddle myself——"

He looked at Carl, as one who should say "There's a milksop for you!" and continued: "And so the

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boy's four and twenty! I should have forgotten, you know—press of business and all that—if it hadn't been for this little party. When his mother was alive we celebrated of course. Well, she was sentimental, like all women—babied him, spoiled him—that's what's the matter now. I've always believed in the Spartan ideal of upbringing, you know—brought up that way myself."

Carl's sensitive mouth shook a little. His mother! If only his mother had lived! He remembered her vividly, a woman with the long, lithe, deep-bosomed body of a goddess, and great, steady blue eyes—she'd healing hands, and a heart to which a hurt, bewildered little boy might always come for consolation! While she had lived she had been a rock of strength, a living buffer between himself and his father.

Pauli said, hurriedly:

"The Winckleman's are late."

"I've a question to ask your father," announced Behrend, importantly. "Business, of course. As a rule professors are fools, dreamers, visionaries. But not your father, Pauli. I always say that learning isn't altogether wasted since that time Arndt's education helped me make three thousand crowns."

Bruce chuckled softly to himself, as he lighted his pipe, and looked over at Behrend who produced a long slip of paper from a pocketbook and waved it in the air.

"Here," said Behrend, "is the schedule I've drawn up for the day——"

Pauli, seated near him, remarked meekly:

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"We had some plans to——"

Behrend looked at her with tolerance. He continued, with an air of brushing aside any plans other than his own:

"After dinner, we shall all walk in the Prater . . ."

Pauli smiled hopefully.

"That was our idea, also," she said, encouragingly.

Behrend considered a moment. Bruce thought, a little angry, a little amused, "By Jove! He's pondering on giving it the chuck—seeing that someone else thought of it first"—but Behrend continued with tremendous condescension:

"Indeed? Well—still—it's a good idea. Then we'll have coffee in, I think, the Third Coffee House—and then—" Here he dug into the wallet once more and produced some slips of green paper, "Six tickets for Ronacher's! My birthday gift and not inexpensive, I can tell you."

Pauli jumped up. The little girl in her, the little girl her friends lost sight of in that motherly, brooding way she had, shone from her eyes and was manifest in her delight. She said:

"Ronacher's? Oh, that's wonderful!"

Behrend said, carelessly:

"Personally, a music hall bores me, but to-day we must think first of Carl and his pleasure."

He thumbed the tickets over and said, expansively:

"Six tickets!"

Pauli looked appealingly at Carl who was turning over the pages of a magazine on the table. As no one else spoke she said, courageously:

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"But there are seven of us—with little Kurt, the Wincklemans' child, we are eight, altogether——"

"Eight? Well, the child doesn't count," said Behrend, carelessly; "and perhaps Carl would remain home—with a book——"

Pauli flushed with anger.

"I'll stay," she said.

Bruce strolled over to where Carl stood and put a hand on his shoulder. Through the blue cloud of pipe smoke his voice came, serene, indifferent:

"Nonsense! We'll get another ticket," he said.

Behrend looked annoyed. With a gesture which indicated, "What are a few crowns to me, more or less?" he answered:

"Of course; you took the very words out of my mouth——"

"Let me get it," Bruce suggested, diffidently.

"Certainly not! I'll telephone." And then he added hopefully: "On Sunday there may not *be* another ticket."

He reached for the telephone, and, his elbow brushing Pauli's apron aside, he stared at the typewriter it had concealed. There was no mistaking it—a typewriter's a typewriter and very unlike anything else—and there it sat, squat and new and shining.

"What's this? A new typewriter . . . by the telephone . . . pretty extravagant for a professor—typewriters and telephones!"

Carl tossed the magazine to the table and turned. His face was quite flushed. He said:

"It's mine—the typewriter——"

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Behrend raised his eyebrows. He said, flicking at the black and white keys:

"Oh, of course—with all the money you're making such toys are easily accessible to you——"

Pauli bit her lip. She thought: "Oh! Why are they so antagonistic—so unfriendly—can't he possibly realize how wrongly he handles Carl . . . why must they be like this with each other?"

Bruce remarked:

"I gave it to Carl—as a birthday gift——"

"Oh!" Behrend laughed shortly. He said, with an attempt at a smile:

"Very generous of you, Mr. Gordon, I'm sure; but then, all the English are rich—look at the advantage they take of us—read the trade reports . . ."

"That's not kind of you, father," said Carl, hotly; but Bruce only shook his fair head at him and smiled, whimsically.

"Not kind!" repeated Behrend. "Perhaps not. But true enough. That's where they get the better of us. Trade. How else? No one doubts we are the superior race!"

"No, August," said a new voice from the doorway of the study. "No one ever doubts that his is the superior race. The only difficulty is in getting the other races to agree to it."

Every one turned. Even Behrend's face softened to something very near affection.

Dr. Arndt came into the room: a big man, vigorous, vital, with shrewd, gentle eyes behind the shining glass of old-fashioned spectacles. Simple, serene, dignified,

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humorous, his personality was one which gave the effect of a complete harmony of body, mind and spirit. His voice was low, but resonant, firm but caressing. His eyes, friendly no matter on whom they looked, never rested upon his daughter save in selfless, protective love.

Pauli ran to him now and slipped her arm through his. She cried, gayly:

"We're going to Ronacher's to-night, father! Mr. Behrend has invited us——"

"I was just about to telephone for a seventh ticket," said Behrend, smiling.

He picked up the receiver and spoke the number to a disinterested operator, his free hand prodding at the typewriter. "American make, eh? Why not a home product? Austria for Austrians, is my idea. Of course in a way Carl's typewriter benefits his nation—the more stuff he writes, the more postage—Carl's stamps aren't stamps—they're round-trip tickets!"

The professor, passing by Carl, laid a hand on his shoulder, and said mildly:

"All great men have to have beginnings. Goethe, for instance—Schiller—Lessing——"

Behrend hung up the receiver with a snort.

"Engaged! What a nuisance a telephone is! Well, Arndt, Lessing ended by starving—and began by it too. Schiller—he would have made a good soldier—except for his poetry——"

"Have a pipe, August?" said the professor, picking one from the pipe rack on the bookcase and offering it.

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"You'll need a pacifier while you struggle with the telephone."

"Thanks, no," said Behrend; "I prefer cigars." He took one from his pocket and worried the end of it in his strong teeth. "I'll sit here until I get that number. It can't be engaged all day——"

Dr. Arndt came close to him. Bruce, Pauli and Carl were gathered around the middle table, laughing at some joke of their own. Arndt said, indicating them:

"Youngsters. Happy youngsters! Does your heart good, doesn't it, August, to see them? I feel fifty years younger when I'm with 'em. Nothing like children to keep a man young——"

Behrend snorted. He said:

"All very well—you've a girl—nice girl, fine little housewife, your Pauli—but a girl, you understand—easier to bring up—less expensive—none of this nonsense about higher education when there are girls in the family. But a boy! Look at my boy—the money I've spent on him—the luxuries I've surrounded him with—and—he fails me! I have been years building up my business—for him—and he laughs at it. He becomes a writer—an unsuccessful writer."

"He'll succeed," said Arndt, confidently, "and then you'll be very proud of him, August. Goethe did more to make Germany respected and understood than all her warriors——"

"Understood? Who wants a nation understood? A nation should be feared!" said Behrend.

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"No. When peoples understand one another there'll be no need for soldiers. England's greatest conqueror was not Nelson, but Shakespeare."

Behrend laughed outright.

"The platform manner! That should be in one of your lectures, Arndt!"

Dr. Arndt looked mock-rueful. He blew a smoke ring, followed it with his eyes, and answered, smiling:

"It is!"

Behrend picked up the telephone again and requested his number in the voice of a drill sergeant. Turning, the receiver clamped to his ear, he remarked:

"I knew it! Carl has talked like that ever since he studied history in your classes. Curious history you teach! A boy should be thinking of business—of marriage—of founding a family. There he sits, all day long and most of the nights, wasting his time with pen and paper!"

Bruce called over his shoulder:

"Hence the typewriter, Mr. Behrend!" and Behrend frowned in his direction.

"Can he dress his wife in paper?" he inquired severely; "can he put ink in the baby's bottle?"

"That depends, I fancy," drawled Bruce absurdly, "on the color of the baby!"

The professor's youthful laugh rang out, and Carl's —and there was a little, embarrassed sound from Pauli who fled into the dining room. Bruce sat quite stolid, at the center table, and smoked his outrageous pipe.

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And Central, in Behrend's ear, howled cheerfully, "The line is busy!"

Behrend banged down the receiver. He said, very wholeheartedly:

"Damn!"

"Great fortunes are made by gratifying appetites, I'll grant you that," said Dr. Arndt, still chuckling, "appetites of one kind or another. . . . But there are greater things than fortunes—the thrill of creating a great thought, an eternal thought." His eyes rested on Carl, and he continued, half humorously: "Thinking doesn't always leave a man poor, much as governments discourage it. Look at us. Pauli and I have—each other, a roof, good food, our beautiful pictures and my life insurance—oh, yes; and a mortgage on the farm that belongs to Baruska's father——"

His eyes went about the room as he spoke, resting upon the many pictures which were hung on the red denim walls. Landscapes, portraits, figures, pictures painted by his friends. Here and there a little water-color sketch that Pauli had painted for a Christmas or a birthday present for him. Dr. Arndt looked at his "collection" with the affection one accords to living entities. They were alive for him, and not many of them were good. Some were even very bad, but he loved them—few people knew how much, and fewer still the longing, unfulfilled, at the bottom of his deep heart—the unsatisfied desire to paint—to express great ideals in great pictures!

Behrend said, picking up the receiver again:

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"A mortgage on Baruska's father's farm, eh? I don't believe in such transactions. Moreover I know how soft-hearted you are!"

"Nothing of the sort. Business merely. The mortgage came to us in the usual way, and the old fellow suggested that we let Baruska work here to pay the interest!"

Behrend dashed down the receiver. He said, furiously:

"In all the world there is no telephone service like ours! Engaged! How can they be engaged—world without end? We'll stop at the theater on our way to the Prater!"

"Carl," said Dr. Arndt, beckoning.

Carl came over to him, and the professor held out his hand—with something in it——

"My gift to you. It's foolish and sentimental, and —quite useless . . . it's—the first lecture you attended!"

Carl took it from him, then held out his hand again. "The first!"

After a moment in which courage and affection, confidence and hope seemed to flow to him through the strong clasp of the other man, he said:

"I remember—everything: the long room, the students, even the streak of sunlight on the wall—and most of all your voice. . . . The same voice that had greeted me since my childhood—that had laughed with me, joined in our play, mine and Pauli's. Yes, just the same. I—I'd thought it would be different, somehow——"

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Bruce strolled lazily up to the two men, joined them, and remarked:

"Lord! I don't remember Muller's! I don't want to!"

"I couldn't forget," said Carl. "How could I? I must have fancied the doctor would turn into something different in a class room, just because I did know him so well—I was frightened."

"I was sound asleep," remarked Bruce, "at my first lecture. And at many thereafter."

"Carl," said Behrend heavily, "is always afraid of something. Shadows, mostly."

Carl laughed.

"Well, not to-day at any rate. It's been a wonderful day—a wrist watch! a typewriter!"

"Seven tickets," suggested his father hastily.

"And," said Bruce, "a lecture!"

They all laughed, and Pauli ran in from the dining room.

"Have I missed anything?" she asked, anxiously.

"There's one thing more," said the professor, "a strange parcel—rather fat."

Pauli stiffened with real anxiety. She looked at Bruce in sudden, accustomed appeal. Before he could speak, Carl asked, innocently:

"A parcel—for me? But—the things from the aunts and the others came at home before I left. Who could be sending me anything here——"

"What did you do with Carl's package, Pauli?" asked her father.

"I—can't remember——"

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"Child! But it's in the desk—isn't it—unless you moved it?"

"I'll get it later," said Pauli; "I must run over and see what's keeping the Wincklemans—you must all be starved."

Carl started for the desk. His face was openly suspicious, his brows drawn together.

"We'll see——"

"No—wait until after dinner," Pauli pleaded; but the package was in Carl's hand. He stood, turned to stone, staring at the address. Bruce laughed, said teasingly:

"It's from a woman? Who'd have suspected? Open it—or do you recognize the perfume?" He moved close to Carl, saw his face and said, sharply, with a complete and alert change of tone: "What's wrong, old chap?"

Behrend jerked a thumb toward Carl and the package and said, with an effort of mountainous irony:

"You left your *rubbers!*"

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CHAPTER FOUR

CARL was silent and motionless under the shock of disappointment, the lesser pang of his father's intentional malice. Only his despairing and bewildered eyes lived in his young, white face. Pauli murmured, "Oh—how *cruel!*" and both Bruce and Professor Arndt, uninformed as they were as to the meaning of Behrend's apparently irrelevant and fantastically foolish remark, were quite aware that her anger and reproach were directed at Behrend, not at the producer who had tucked Carl's play into an envelope, typed his own address on the left-hand corner and sent it back to the author.

Carl's heart stirred suddenly in his breast, his expressive face broke up into lines of impotent sorrow. All the work, all the soul-hunger—all the emotion and belief—gone into a few typewritten pages—for nothing. He put the manuscript on the desk, very carefully as if it were essentially most fragile, and touched it with his hand—Pauli thought, tears in her throat, as if he closed the eyes of a dead child. . . .

Behrend laughed.

Pauli turned on him again. She repeated her reproach to Behrend, very definitely, calling in by name, in a low voice shaken with sorrow for Carl:

"That was cruel, Mr. Behrend—cruel and hard——"

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Her father, the innocent cause of the tense little scene, put his hand appealingly on her arm. He said something, which she did not hear, save a word or two—"our house . . . a guest." She went on blindly:

"You've no right to mock him. . . . Carl is a great author. . . . You'll be proud of him some day. I'm proud of him *now!*"

Behrend's lips opened to an irritated sneer, the professor started to speak; but Carl raised his hand in a little gesture, a gesture of defeat, not without dignity. He said, quietly:

"Please say no more about it—I—I deserve it—no doubt."

Dr. Arndt turned to Behrend. He said, in a tone almost of command:

"Come into my room, August; we'll leave the children together for a little." In a lower tone he added: "Don't make the boy any unhappier. Youth takes its disappointments hard, my friend. We must help him as much as we can; and Pauli, too—I'm afraid her birthday party isn't going to be such a success after all. If only I had not spoken of the package! What an idiot I am!"

He took Behrend's arm as he spoke and led him toward the study door. Behrend argued, petulantly:

"Oh, I wouldn't mind his writing so much if he'd write what people want! They want stories of girls—of crime—exciting stories—things you don't have to think about. But Carl's always trying to solve problems, writing plays *about* something——"

Bruce intervened, with a half smile:

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"Weren't you going to ask Dr. Arndt something, Mr. Behrend?"

Behrend looked frowningly at the young man. He rather admired Bruce Gordon—for his poise, his careless manner that was indifferent without rudeness, his charm, the sense of background he imparted to the onlooker—admired him, yes; envied him, decidedly—and disliked him.

Now he said:

"Oh—yes; I'd almost forgotten. What would happen, Arndt, if twenty of us merged to buy up all the grain?"

Arndt looked his amused astonishment. He replied, as the two men walked slowly toward the door:

"For one thing, the rest of us would have no bread."

His tone was the tone one uses to a foolish, ignorant and questioning child. But Behrend proceeded eagerly:

"Oh, no; I think not—we would only raise the price a few hellers. At least, that's my opinion. But how much of our wheat comes from outside? Where does one find the statistics?"

The professor opened the door to his study. He said, with a mock-bow, "This way, please?" and shut the door on the two of them.

Pauli had not taken her eyes from Carl. Now she moved to him swiftly, touched his arm and spoke his name. All her love went into the four little letters: her longing to help, her maternal desire to protect him at any cost, at any sacrifice of self. And Bruce, turning his eyes from the sight of her little, anxious, loving

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face, stared steadily at the marble reproduction of the "Winged Victory" on top of the brimming bookcase. He spoke, as it were, over his shoulder:

"Don't forget London, Carl! There's always another chance, you know——"

Carl took his fascinated gaze from the little package on the desk. He looked at Pauli, and then across to Bruce. He said, trying to smile:

"I'm sorry—making a scene like that. I'll never grow up. What a donkey I am, anyway! Forgive me, you two." And, the smile gaining as he saw their faces light a little, he added, rueful as a small boy, "You were right about the rubbers, Pauli. We'll have to change the code word——"

"What's all this about rubbers?" asked Bruce, "I'm completely in the dark——"

Pauli explained and Bruce laughed.

"Oh, you two idiotic children!" he said affectionately; "do you think Mr. Behrend quite devoid of the mathematical faculty of putting two rubbers together and getting several rejections?"

Baruska burst in through the dining-room doors. Her red face was smeared with flour; she presented a curious and comic sight. And her voice was almost devotional as she breathed:

"Fraülein, come look at him, with his great, round, brown belly!"

Bruce grinned impishly. His lips formed the word and question "Behrend?" but did not utter it; and Baruska went on:

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"My goose! Come, show me how to fix the little radishes on the platter."

Pauli hunted for and found her apron. She said, abstractedly, "I'm coming, Baruska," and followed the maid out of the room. Her look at Bruce as she left was an unspoken admonition. Bruce went over to Carl, pulled up a chair, pushed his friend down into another and asked, seriously:

"About this producer, now—Bergman? Do you know him?"

Carl shook his head.

"No. I sent it to him a venture. He didn't like it—and he's right enough, I dare say."

Bruce smoked in silence for a minute. Then he asked, carelessly:

"You'll—quit?"

"No. I'll do it over again. From the first line to the last. You see—I believe in the play, Bruce. For a minute, when I took that damned package in my hand I thought that I didn't—that I'd lost my vision—that I'd been following a marsh light. But it passed. I do believe in it; nothing can shake me; not Bergman: certainly not my father."

"That's the proper spirit," Bruce encouraged him. "Put your back to the wall, old son, and fight!"

"Oh, I'll fight," said Carl, warming. "I'll fight. I'm not afraid of anything that's my job. I want to show people the waste and futility of prejudice and dissension, whether they want to be shown or not. To-morrow I'll find work—clerking, anything; any-

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thing that will pay me a few crowns. I'll get out of father's house where I'm served arguments with breakfast, dinner and supper, and find some cheap lodgings somewhere. I'll eat very little—and write—and rewrite—and write again, until I've proved to myself, beyond shadow of a doubt, and to everyone else beside, that I'm justified—that I can write, with all that's in me—big things, real things!"

Bruce tapped out his pipe, rose to fill it from the jar on the bookcase, and said, as he passed Carl:

"Good boy!"

All his deep, silent approval, all his belief in his friend were in the simple, almost childish words. Carl's eyes followed him across the room, and went beyond him, beyond the door through which Pauli had disappeared. In the little silence that followed on Bruce's brief verdict they could hear her voice in the kitchen—her laughter. Once, she came swiftly into the dining room and as swiftly passed out of sight again.

Pauli—and Bruce, his best friends; he loved them—as friends.

No; not Pauli. He loved her as a man loves the one woman. He was dependent on her; he was as dependent on her as a child upon its mother; she was necessary to him in a thousand uncounted ways. Sometimes he forgot how necessary. Sometimes he even forgot how much he loved her. Yet it was always there; it was like a living light in the secret shrine of his soul. But—he had nothing to offer her save that unspoken, sometimes disregarded, love and

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the unsuccessful work of his brained hands, the work that was the expression of a different love, self-nourished. And he loved the woman far too much to sacrifice her to his work.

He thought of Bruce. Four years now, and their comradeship was fixed and firm. It had grown slowly but lustily; it was a companionship of dissimilarities, of personalities as widely different as sunlight and starshine. There wasn't a finer man in the world than Bruce, honest and clear-eyed, generous and tolerant. And Bruce had lived for four years in the same house with Pauli Arndt, had seen her every day, had received the gifts of her friendship and sweetness. . . . Bruce had eyes in his head, ears to hear and a heart to understand and——

Carl spoke, quickly, without premeditation. He asked:

"Bruce, do you love Pauli?"

Bruce turned, the pipe in his hand. The slow color burned up to his cheekbones; the eyes that met Carl's so frankly and fully were without evasion. He answered:

"Yes."

Carl's heart sank. He put out a hand as though for a moment he groped in a devastating darkness. He'd known, of course—what man could be near her and not love her? And Bruce was worthy . . . *worthy!* Carl knew! He asked, with a terrible effort, the words cutting their way to the surface like so many little suicidal swords:

"Why don't you—ask her to marry you?"

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As he waited for the answer he thought: "It would be the best thing that could happen. Bruce and Pauli —they'd let me go on being their friend, sharing their happiness, not entirely cast out. . . .

But his heart said: "No! No! Not that. . . ."

Bruce answered succinctly:

"I did. . . ."

He came nearer Carl, stood before him nursing the brown polished bowl of the unlit pipe in his palm, and added, slowly:

"When I first came here—that long ago—it didn't take me long to know—the one woman—you understand. But that was before I knew that you loved her, Carl, perhaps even," he ended with a half laugh, "before you quite knew, yourself——"

Carl asked, his voice taut:

"She said—*what* did she say, Bruce?"

"She said," Bruce told him, gravely, "that from the time you were children together—playing, making a pretend-home out of a great wooden box—that she had thought of nothing but—some day—a real home—with you."

Carl got to his feet. He asked, his voice roughened:

"Pauli—said *that?*"

"Yes. Quite simply. She was sorry for me, I think. She liked me. She likes me now, and is still sorry for me when she has time to give me a thought. But—that's all there is to it, Carl. She likes me, she's sorry for me—just that."

"Why have you told me?" Carl said, staring at his friend. "Me—when you love her?"

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"That's why," Bruce answered him. "Because I love her."

They stood there in the homely, comfortable little room which had given so much to them both. Stood there within the sound of her beloved voice, the two men who loved her, one of whom she loved. And it was that one who cried out, passionately:

"Bruce! I'm no good, I tell you. No good. . . . I'm not worth the tips of her dear fingers. . . . I'm thinking always of myself. Myself first—and my work; while you—there's no one like you, Bruce. Father's right . . . I'll die a child. Always groping and wanting and crying for the moon—a child!"

Bruce's heart said to him, pitifully: "And Pauli was born a mother."

"I can't ask her to wait," Carl argued. "Wait and hope and grow old—I won't have her in a dingy room, —in a shabby street . . . doing the washing, losing all her bright gayety, choking with dead laughter . . . Bruce; it's come to this, hasn't it? It's my work—my work, I tell you—or—Pauli!"

Bruce looked at him a little. He thought, "You sensitive, idealistic, lovable little *fool!* Burning up with it all—uncertain, unsatisfied. . . ." And he thought again, "If I had his chance—" But he said, aloud, without any hint of condemnation:

"Which wins?"

Carl's arms fell lax to his side. He said, very simply and with a great, enchanted longing:

"I love—Pauli."

"I know," said Bruce.

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"And I need her!"

"I know," Bruce told him again; and again his heart spoke silently to him: "Need her! Yes, that's it; you *need* her. God! don't I need her too? But she'd never look at me. I seem—strong, I suppose. She'll have to stoop where she loves . . . to lift up—to protect——"

"I can't give up my work," said Carl, "I can't. I'm not that kind of a coward . . . it's—part of me. The best part. What would I be without it? Nothing—an empty shell. But oh! my little Pauli—*my little Pauli!*"

His heart was naked in the words. Bruce put up a hand unconsciously as if to defend himself from that assault upon his emotion, that hammering at the door of his most sacred reserves. He said, almost angrily:

"Carl, ask her—to-night!"

"Carl stepped back and looked at him, for the moment estranged. He repeated, bitterly:

"I'm not that kind of a coward, either!"

Bruce understood. He looked at his friend and thought, "No, you're not. You're a brave man, brave enough to give up the woman you love because you feel it isn't fair to her to ask her to share uncertainty—or worse. And brave enough to go on with your work in the face of ridicule and unbelief." But he could not say this to his friend, being Bruce Gordon and not articulate. He held out his hand instead and gripped the fingers Carl laid in his. He said, choking a little:

"No; you're no coward, Carl—you're—*fine*—all through!"

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE doorbell rang, insistently.

Neither Bruce nor Carl moved. They stared at each other in a curious, tense silence, which was instinct with understanding. Bruce's blonde brows were bent, less in a frown than in concentration. He was still thinking that Carl was a very fine person indeed, and that neither he nor anyone else should ever come between Carl and Pauli. And he knew that Carl was obstinately reiterating to himself that he must not, would not marry Pauli until he could offer her something more substantial than dreams, until he could afford to give her comforts, *safety*.

Pauli appeared at the dining-room door. She ordered, laughing:

"Do go to the door, stupids!" She looked from one to the other, a little puzzled at their attitudes, their silence, and added, "It's probably Fritzi and Mitzi."

Carl did not stir, but Bruce rose obediently and walked across the room and flung the door back. Laughter met him, a hubbub of greetings and chaffing. Pauli, following his progress, stopped a second by Carl,

"Is anything wrong? You haven't been quarreling, have you?" she pleaded anxiously.

Carl shook his head, his eyes fixed on her rather desperately. She grew restive under his look. She said, with an effort at lightness:

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"You looked so—solemn, you two; not at all like yourselves, you know."

Mitzi Winckleman came upon the scene. She always entered a room with a little impetuous rush. She was in her middle-twenties but looked rather younger, a very pretty little person, dark, vivacious, with a way of carrying herself and wearing her clothes that only smart Viennese women have. Her six-year-old Kurt stalked along beside her, in the childish imitation of the military stride which had been taught him in his kindergarten.

"Here's the first of us," announced Mitzi. "Are we late? Hello, Carl! Many happy returns! Pauli, how pretty you look!"

Mitzi had a breathless little voice. She had, too, an inexhaustible vitality and brought with her, wherever she went, an air of the most delicate and charming gayety.

"Where's Fritz?" Pauli asked her.

"He's coming. I've been all morning getting him dressed. He can't find a *thing!* What makes men so helpless? It's 'Mitzi, where's my tie?' and 'Mitzi, what have you done with my socks?' and 'Mitzi, did you deliberately hide my shirt?' all day long."

Kurt, who had been shaking hands with a delicious gravity, spoke up in his childish pipe, confident of the world's attention, confident of himself as only a beloved youngster can be.

"I dressed myself!" he announced with proper pride.

Pauli knelt down beside him and ruffled his spotless Sunday state with a great hug. Mitzi said, gayly:

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"So he did, bless him, buttons, laces and all. But not his father! Not Fritz! I was certain you'd see him across the courtyard! Why will men stand undressed before open windows?"

She looked from Bruce to Carl. Bruce chuckled and removed his pipe long enough to reply, weightily:

"It's a problem that has puzzled the ages——"

But Mitzi interrupted him and answered herself:

"I suppose it's their natural generosity!"

Carl and Pauli and Bruce responded with a shout of laughter. Mitzi's little face was supernaturally grave as she looked inquiringly from one to the other, and asked:

"Well, what else? Fritzi was out until all hours drinking beer with the paper's critic and——"

She halted and flushed, instinctively clapping a little hand over her mouth. Her friends looked at her questioningly. One never knew what Mitzi might say next. She recovered, and went on easily, but her eyes danced as if she had just successfully eluded a danger:

"And—some others. They'd have been better off home in bed. But the newspapers seems to demand a man's sleeping hours as well as his waking ones . . . and of course Fritzi can't be spared from any conference or gathering. They think very well of him at the office. Carl, what's wrong? You don't look overwhelmingly happy."

Carl smiled, with an effort.

"I'm hungry," he answered.

Kurt, who had been confiding state secrets to his adored Pauli in a shrill stage whisper, looked up ap-

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provingly. He could understand why Uncle Carl didn't look "happy." Kurt himself was always hungry. He was hungry now. He said as much in a loud, determined voice.

"Have patience," counseled Pauli as the little company found chairs; "the goose had to go back in the oven for a bit."

Mitzi gave an exaggerated sigh. She asked Carl:

"Presents?"

"Lots. A wrist watch from Pauli, a typewriter from Bruce—see it over there? Isn't it a beauty? A lecture from the professor—and——"

Mitzi broke in, her face radiant:

"All very well. But wait till your see our present!"

Kurt slipped down from Pauli's lap and went over to Bruce. He placed a small paw upon the young man's knee and looked him gravely in the eyes. He said, portentously:

"Listen! I'm going to have a birthday!"

Bruce started in mock astonishment. His deep voice expressed utter unbelief. He asked:

"No? Is it possible? So small a person?"

Kurt nodded his head with such violence that one feared for his mop of blonde hair. He inquired, tensely:

"Yes. What will you give me, Uncle Bruce?"

His mother emitted a small shriek of horror.

"Kurt! What a greedy little boy!"

Under the cover of laughter Bruce asked the child, seriously:

"What do you want me to give you? This matter

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takes due and careful consideration, young 'un."

Kurt pondered the difficult question. He said, finally and firmly:

"A sword and a drum!"

"Kurt!" expostulated his parent again. Kurt looked at her, nodded, and amended his demand:

"If you please, Uncle Bruce."

"We'll see. But drummer boys don't carry swords, you know, Kurt."

Kurt looked pained at such ignorance. He replied, pityingly:

"Oh, yes, they do. Professor Arndt says so."

Pauli laughed.

"Perhaps they did when he was a soldier. In the Franco-Prussian war, a long time ago, little Kurt."

Bruce put a finger under the child's round, rosy chin.

"What would you do with a sword?"

Kurt struck an attitude. He declaimed, as his mother looked at him proudly:

"Kill the enemy!"

Carl started. His thoughts, never far from his play, went back to it again, as he heard its title spoken in the clear little voice. He heard Bruce's next question:

"The enemy? And who are they—exactly?"

"Everybody but us!" answered Kurt, a little astonished at this further display of adult stupidity, and secretly wondering, not for the first time, if grown-ups were as idiotic as they often pretended to be, or as wise as they always said they were. He added:

"And we can lick everybody!"

Mitzi nodded approvingly at this display of belliger-

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ence. Carl glanced at Pauli and she at him, each a little shocked and startled at this early confirmation of the theories he had embodied in his play. Bruce continued with his questionnaire.

"Who told you that? Funny thing, but it's exactly what my teacher used to tell me."

Kurt's face fell. He looked exceedingly puzzled, and the others watched him grope for an honest explanation to his phenomenon. He wouldn't doubt Uncle Bruce, of course. Uncle Bruce was—himself, and could do no wrong. But something was inconsistent somewhere.

His face cleared. He had found the answer. He said, happily:

"Then your teacher was a liar!"

"Kurt!" gasped his mother. "Where on earth did you hear such things?"

Carl turned to Pauli. He said, whimsically:

"Out of the mouths of— Well, so they teach it in the schools still, do they? And I expect people to believe my play!"

Pauli shook her head at him. She lifted a finger and leveled it at little Kurt.

"Bloodthirsty infant! No sword for you! You'd be attacking the cat, first thing we knew!"

Kurt's eyes filled. But he manfully bit back a wail of disappointment. All was not yet lost. He asked, imploringly:

"Well, then—what about the drum?"

This persistence broke up the meeting. As the

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laughter subsided into chuckles Bruce promised, his hand on the small shoulder:

"Well—we'll see!"

From a window in the other room opening on the court a sound of music floated in—violin—Sarasate's "Ziguenerwaisen," superbly and brilliantly played. Pauli said:

"There's that man again; he never misses a day. Sometimes working around here in the mornings I forget to hear him, I'm so used to his practicing."

"We hear him, too," Mitzi said. "He plays very well. Do you know who he is, Pauli?"

"No. I've never even seen him. He came about two months ago. I'd miss him if he went now; he's like a lovely, disembodied voice—except when he's just doing scales."

The bell rang.

"Fritz—at last," announced Mitzi, going to the door just as the professor and Mr. Behrend came in from the study. Behrend was talking, as usual; equally as usual he was saying:

"I don't agree with you at all!"

Professor Arndt smote his friend on the shoulder. He answered:

"Of course you don't. Nobody does. That's why I know I'm right!"

The open door revealed Fritz Winckleman with a chair draped over either arm. He made a mock dramatic entrance and remarked, gayly:

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"Hello, every one! Carl, congratulations and good wishes! Pauli, here are the chairs. I picked out our best. Most of ours are slightly disabled owing to Mitzi's habit of standing on them to hang pictures and adjust curtains. She'll never learn——"

"Fritz," said his wife, indignantly, "don't malign me. It's you and your terrible friends that ruin the furniture! Tilting back on two legs——"

Fritz grinned. He was a buoyant person, a little older than Carl or Bruce, very alert and very likable. Even his pronounced self-confidence, his self-opination amused rather than irritated. He was so impulsive, often foolishly so, so irresponsible, acting first and thinking after, that he seemed younger than his years. And he had the most generous heart in the world. Mitzi knew that—as did his friends. She adored him and agreed with him that he was a person of consequence. They were a very attractive, human little couple, deeply and openly in love.

Bruce rescued the chairs and took them into the dining room under Pauli's direction. Fritz looked around the company, cleared his throat, rubbed his hands, and announced:

"And now I'm compelled to rush off for a few minutes!"

Pauli looked her housewifely despair.

"Fritz! That means hours!"

"Not at all. I have to go to the paper. I've forgotten Carl's present!"

Carl, who had followed Bruce into the dining room, reappeared.

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"Pauli says that dinner is almost ready, and your son is dying of slow starvation. Let the present wait, Fritz—and tell me about it instead."

"Not much! The office is two minutes away only, and anyway I should report."

Mitzi frowned upon her lord and master.

"Report? On Sunday? They work you to death!"

Fritz acknowledged the truth of this statement with a low bow.

"They do. They can't get along without me."

He started for the door. Mitzi followed him. She put her hand on his arm and laughed up at him.

"Must you go, dear? You know I can't keep a secret!"

"You give this one away and I'll strangle you!' threatened her husband. He took her by her slender throat with mock ferocity, pulled her nearer, kissed her on the mouth and departed, laughing, through the door. Mitzi came back to the group with a slightly heightened color.

"The Archduke is being received in Serajevo," was her explanation of Fritz's departure.

The professor looked grave.

"The Archduke shouldn't have gone to Bosnia—he was warned by the Serbian legation," he said, lighting his pipe.

"What does a warning amount to?" Behrend asked. "As if a nation can avoid responsibility by such hand-washing! But nothing will happen, we are too well prepared. No one strikes a man famous for his strength."

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"On the contrary," said the professor, "someone always thrashes a bully—sooner or later."

"Germany and Austria could whip the world," said Behrend. "I wonder what the Kaiser and his Grand Admiral talked about when they visited our Archduke at Konopisht!"

"They wouldn't insult us anyway," laughed Mitzi; "and state discussions don't concern us, after all."

"Fighting is not longer probable," Carl said; "there is talk of reducing armaments——"

"So there was before the Franco-Prussian war," said the professor, watching a smoke ring.

Carl shrugged his slim shoulders.

"I should refuse to fight!" he said abruptly.

Behrend looked across at his son. His heavy features were for once lively—with shame and disgust. Bruce broke in to avert the menace of an argument between Carl and his father. He said, very lazily:

"Well, no one wants war——"

Behrend glowered at him.

"No one wants cholera either. But it occurs."

The professor laughed. He said, mildly:

"It would occur oftener if we allowed the physicians to decide whether we should have it!"

Bruce whistled.

"One for you! What a slander on my noble profession, Doctor Arndt!"

Pauli raised an eyebrow at her friend.

"Fledgling-medico!" she said.

But Behrend was not to be put off.

"We must keep the Serbs from the Adriatic!"

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"Does it matter to you, August?" asked the professor.

"It matters to my country! The Balkans, permitted to gain strength and independence of us—or Turkey—would become the advance guard of Russia——"

He was not quite sure of his ground—floundered a little. The professor smiled. Behrend continued:

"We must push our coastline farther South."

"Now, why, exactly?" asked Arndt.

"To—to—to reach the Near East——"

"Why?" repeated the professor, inflexibly.

Behrend looked his indignation.

"I—I don't know. I leave such matters to the statesmen. I read it, last week, in *Die Welt!*"

Mitzi struck her hands together.

"Fritz wrote that article!" she revealed, in delight.

"He did?" her host said. "Why?"

Mitzi looked puzzled. She said, finally:

"I don't know!"

"Does he?" inquired Arndt, knowing that one only has to ask *why* of the war menace to drive its partisans in a corner and hang them with their own rope.

Behrend exploded into noise and putter.

"Of course! A patriot doesn't ask questions. He stands, as I do, ready to give the last drop of blood to his country—gladly!"

Every one save the professor listened tolerantly enough. None of them really thought of war save in the abstract. It had not for them the remotest possibility.

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Baruska appeared, beaming. In a stentorian voice she announced:

"Dinner!"

"August, a truce!" declared the professor, and Mitzi darted into the dining room and returned waving a napkin.

"Behold! the white flag!" she laughed.

Pauli rose.

"Oh, what heavy nonsense we've been talking! Like people discussing who will ride in the front seat of a motor that they are never going to have. The important thing now is—Fritz!"

Kurt raised a plaintive howl:

"Mother—I'm *so* hungry!"

Behrend looked approvingly at the child. He said:

"As Kurt is hungry—and the rest too—we shan't wait."

Pauli turned to Baruska.

"Pour the wine," she ordered. "Mr. Winckleman will be back any minute. Beer for the professor, tea for Mr. Gordon."

Behrend raised hands to heaven.

"Tea! Barbarians, these English!" he declaimed.

Mitzi attracted his attention.

"Wait till you see the present Fritz has."

"A new typewriter?" asked Behrend. "Or—perhaps another pair of rubbers?"

Mitzi gaped frankly. Pauli said, hastily:

"Mr. Behrend is joking. Shall we go in?"

Carl spoke, quietly:

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"Father means—my play came back from Bergman!"

Mitzi looked dumfounded. Her hand touched Carl's arm. She said, amazed, as Behrend and Kurt went past them into the dining room:

"Why, you can't mean that! You are mistaken! Only last night—when Fritz had supper with our critics—he was told—quite certainly—that Bergman's accepted 'The Enemy.'"

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CHAPTER SIX

THE silence which followed had in it something of the element of fear. . . . Mitzi was deliciously afraid —because she had broken her word. Pauli and Bruce were afraid that they had not heard correctly—and Carl was in terror lest this thing prove a joke—the sort of joke that had been played on Tantalus—in terror because he was afraid to believe the evidence of his own ears.

From the dining room they heard Behrend's deep voice, the professor's lower tones, the laughter of little Kurt as Baruska teased him and cut clumsy capers for his amusement. . . .

"What did you say, Mitzi?" asked Carl, finally.

Mitzi drew a deep breath. Well, better make a clean breast of it—she was fairly in for it now. She looked from one to the other: Bruce, stolid enough but his eyes shining; Pauli, her whole little figure one tense appeal; Carl, motionless, almost expressionless—yet Pauli knew that his heart was praying, "Don't let it be a lie . . . ah, *don't* let it be a lie!"

"Fritz had supper with the paper's critic, as I told you," Mitzi explained, "last night. And Bergman was there. He told them he'd taken the play—Fritz wrote the announcement for to-morrow's paper . . . and got a dozen proof sheets to surprise you to-day . . . oh,

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good heavens! What will he say to me, now that I've told!"

Behrend's voice assailed their ears:

"Do come in——"

Mitzi turned, her eyes a little dim, from the look she saw on Carl's face, on Pauli's—and yes—by all that was wonderful—on Bruce's too! She said, trying to laugh, but not succeeding: "Fritz will destroy me!" and ran into the dining room. Carl looked helplessly from Bruce to Pauli.

"Can it . . . Do you suppose . . . Oh, *is* it true?"

Bruce said, practically:

"Open the manuscript, there'll be a note there, I fancy——"

Carl went to the desk, stumbling a little. He picked up the square, thick envelope. His hands shook. The others followed him.

"Oh; what's in it?" asked Pauli, anxiously, and Bruce dropped a steadying hand on Carl's shoulder.

"Hurry up, can't you?"

Carl turned and with a gesture of helplessness handed his friend the package.

"Open it. . . . I—I can't! Why did I wait? Why did I take it for granted that . . .?"

Bruce opened the envelope, drew out the folded manuscript of the play, thick, closely written. Carl groaned. . . .

"Idiot! Fritz and his practical jokes!"

A paper fell to the floor. Pauli followed it with her intent blue eyes. She said, pointing:

"Isn't that——"

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"A letter!" Bruce shouted, and stopped to recover it. Holding it, he looked inquiringly at Carl.

"Read it!" Carl ordered.

"It begins with the usual felicitations," Bruce told him, "and goes on: 'I have given "The Enemy" a careful reading. It is a fine play, and if you will consent to change the ending I will be proud to produce it. I return the manuscript to you, and will be glad if you will make an appointment with me at my office so that we may talk over the necessary changes. With congratulations, my dear sir, believe me, your admiring and obedient——'"

Bruce broke off. He extended the letter toward Carl.

"You see? If you'll change the ending."

"I have changed it!" Carl shouted. "Already. . . . Oh, it can't possibly be true! Read it again. No, give it to me! I'll read it for myself."

He snatched at the letter. Held it close to his eyes, read, line for line, threw it down on the desk, and turned to the girl.

"Pauli!" he said.

The tears brimmed over, ran down her cheeks. She said, with shaken lips:

"Carl—dear——"

They looked at one another. They had forgotten Bruce. Bruce turned from them and went slowly into the dining room. He thought: "That settles it . . . it's—all over." He said to himself, with a certain savagery: "Well, you're glad, aren't you? Glad they're getting what they want? Glad it's come right for

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them?" His heart answered: "Yes. But what are you going to do, now? They don't even need you any more."

Suddenly he was sick for England; the green checkered fields; the great trees, knee deep in grass; the silver winding rivers; old houses, serene in sunlight or sleepy with the sound of rain upon their roofs; hedgerows, dewy, and great roses blowing in English gardens. Sick for the sound of English voices, for his mother's slow, gentle smile . . . for—home! Home was the place one went to, finally, when one was wounded. One went there and salved the hurts with the old familiar things of one's birthright. . . .

He went on into the dining room. He'd not tell them there yet. Let those two have their little moment together, free of the delight, even, of the most friendly.

Behrend said:

"Do hurry! What on earth is keeping all of you?"

Bruce looked back at Carl and Pauli. They were standing as he had left them, like statues; needing, he thought, with an unusual flight of fancy for him, the right word, the magic gesture to melt them into each other's arms, passionate flesh and blood. He answered Behrend over the ache in his throat:

"There's a letter to be answered at once." He started to pull the dining-room doors to, and Behrend said curiously:

"What are you doing that for? Can nothing wait until after dinner?"

Bruce made a gesture, an apologetic gesture in the

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direction of Pauli and Carl. He took his place at the table. The professor and Mitzi looked at him, one gently, the other keenly. Both knew . . . both knew of his hurt. Mitzi knew more, but, having had her say, was determined not to "let it go further." The professor said, quietly:

"We'll not wait longer," and bowed his head to pronounce the blessing. A moment later there was a clatter of silver and china and the sound of voices talking all together.

In the other room Carl said, huskily:

"Now—I'll write the first words on my typewriter!"

"To Bergman?" Pauli asked, persuading herself that they would be, but somehow disappointed. She added: "Oh, Carl; I can't tell you how happy I am . . ."

"Nor I you—" said Carl, standing in front of the machine. "No, not to Bergman . . . to Pauli."

He must speak to her. He couldn't endure to have his father overhear. So he touched the keys. She leaned over his shoulder. Slowly, with one inexperienced finger he formed the letters. Under her eyes it was spelled out there, magically, marvelously:

"I . . . LOVE . . . YOU. . . . I have always loved you. I couldn't tell you before, but you must have known. Will you marry me, Pauli? Will you marry me—*soon?*"

She leaned over him, smiling, crying. She put out her hand—the keys rattled violently—three times:

"Y—E—S."

His hand lay over hers on the keys, pressed down hard. Her face, bent to him, was radiant. And from

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the dining room Behrend's irritated voice reached them:

"Oh, shut the doors, then. I can't endure a typewriter!"

They turned, a very little. Bruce was at the doors, drawing them together. He said, with a ghost of a smile and an apparition of a wink:

"So sorry!"

The doors shut.

Carl got to his feet. He pulled Pauli into his arms. He cried out to her:

"Pauli, see—I can write! Ah, you darling, you never doubted, did you? Pauli, I shall be a great author—and always—your lover. . . ."

The telephone rang sharply. The lovers looked at it as if not comprehending the meaning of the signal. Pauli said, oddly, on a little sighing breath:

"Oh—I—Carl, I'm *afraid!*"

Carl laughed.

"Of what? Of happiness? Our troubles are over! This is—just the beginning. How does the old tale go, Pauli, my heart? *And then they lived happily—forever after.*"

The telephone rang, and rang. She whispered:

"Answer it?"

"Kiss me!"

Her hands crept up, up, toward his shoulders—fell to her sides. She thought she heard a stirring in the dining room, beyond the doors. She pleaded:

"Answer, Carl!"

"Oh, what does it amount to?" he moved away from her, a little unhappily, took down the receiver. He

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said, "We'll take a flat and get some furniture——"

"Carl!" said Pauli, laughing.

He looked down at the thing in his hand, smiled, put it resolutely to his ear.

"Hello? Yes, Fritz. We're waiting. *What!* When? It doesn't seem possible. You're sure? How soon can you get here? all right, then. Good-by. . . ."

As he was speaking, Pauli had taken the piece of paper from the typewriter, folded it, and put it in the bosom of her dress. She turned now, alarmed, as a woodland creature is terrified at an alien breath, an alien step. She asked, trembling:

"What was it?"

"Fritz isn't coming," Carl said, replacing the instrument. "The Archduke has been killed in Sarejevo."

Pauli looked at him, speechless, not crediting her senses. She whispered, finally, under her breath: Oh, how *dreadful!*" and with a premonition that these seven words held something of tremendous importance to them all, she started for the dining-room doors. But Carl was too quick for her. He swung her around and into his arms. This was his moment, their moment, nothing must spoil it. Nothing should spoil it. As he held her, as he kissed her, passionately, possessively, he cried out, exultant and reassuring:

"Oh, Pauli, darling! What's that to us!"

And all over the world unknown people were saying, *"what's that to us?"* of an event that was not to leave untouched or unchanged the life of any human being in the world.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

THE moment caught them up, passed. Pauli drew herself away. She said:

"Tell them, dearest . . . what Fritz phoned."

He ran to the dining-room doors—flung them open.

"Fritz phoned the Archduke shot—a student—in Sarejevo——"

Every one, save little Kurt, rose mechanically. Mitzi, impulsive, swayed Mitzi, burst into tears. Bruce whistled under his breath, and the professor went white. Baruska stood there at the kitchen door looking from one to the other. Jan's head appeared over her shoulder, staring. Behrend's face flamed red with a rush of angry and astonished blood. He smote his fist down among the china and glass.

"Killed! Killed! By God, this is terrible! This is a challenge——"

Arndt said:

"He was warned." He added, "Does Fritz say more?"

"No. He can't get here. He'll ring up later, or join us somewhere. He says the city's in a turmoil. . . ."

Bruce spoke, deliberately:

"This is rotten news—but——"

Behrend turned on him:

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"Rotten? Is that all you can say?" He sank back into his chair. His gesture said, "Well, one must go on living." He picked up his knife and fork.

Pauli stood where Carl had left her. She called: "Carl——"

He went back to her. The doors were open but no one was heeding them, just then. He took her in his arms. He said, again:

"Pauli—Pauli—what is it to us?"

His lips touched her closed wet eyes, her satin-smooth cheek. His arms tightened; he kissed her, profoundly, on her warm, red mouth.

Behrend rose from his seat at the table and came fussing to the doors, his napkin in his hand. He said:

"What's all this? Come in, can't you, and tell us what Fritz——"

He broke off. He had seen them draw apart. His slow mind labored after his eyes. He repeated, a little testily but without any amazement:

"What's this . . . this?"

Carl said, definitely:

"Pauli and I, sir—we're to be married. Bergman has accepted my play . . ."

"But—" argued Behrend.

Pauli ran toward him. She pulled at his coat sleeve, held out her other hand to Carl. They went, linked, into the dining room, Behrend heavy, expostulating, frowning a little at an event which he had not, personally, engineered.

Mitzi and Bruce and Arndt looked up, expectantly. Bruce knew—about the play . . . and more. Mitzi

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knew—about the play, and now her woman's eyes read the other news in Pauli's eyes, in Carl's bearing. Dr. Arndt was quiet, grave, preoccupied with foreboding.

"My play's accepted," Carl said, "and—congratulate me. . . ."

"My dear boy!" Arndt was on his feet now. Carl laughed shakily.

"Not on the play. Let that wait. On Pauli. She'll marry me, if——"

Behrend said, over the turmoil, and plaintively:

"But one doesn't approach marriage like this!"

Dr. Arndt had an arm around his daughter and a hand fast in Carl's. Baruska, as if forewarned by a sixth sense, was standing at the sideboard, crying bravely into a dish of potatoes. Jan's shock head appeared at the kitchen door, in his hand a glass from which he drank with appropriate gestures. Somewhere on the fringes of the group Mitzi was crying and laughing, trying to get within kissing distance of her friend. Alone, like a little island, stolid and engrossed, small Kurt sat still in this ocean of clamor, these tides of emotion, and ate—and ate—and ate. . . .

Dr. Arndt said:

"Nonsense. In this case, how foolish for our Carl to approach me on tiptoe—in a morning coat—to demand Pauli's hand. See, he has it already; and hasn't he been a son to me all these years?"

Mitzi came up then, fought her way through, kissed Pauli soundly. She said something that sounded like, "Be as happy as we are——"

Bruce didn't speak, not really. He just managed to

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commandeer a hand of each, at last, and shake them painfully. His eyes shone. He was so glad for them, so really glad; and his heart was a brittle piece of glass in his breast, so infinitely fragile, so cutting. . . .

Behrend stopped in and made himself the keystone of the group. He kissed Pauli in a practical sort of fashion, thumped Carl on the shoulder. He said:

"Well, it's settled. Now, for heaven's sake, dinner!"

From little Kurt's blue eyes, now a trifle glazed with sufficiency, there shot a gleam of admiration. This man was not to be deflected. This man was beyond diversion. This man knew what he wanted . . . all qualities very appealing to childhood.

Eventually, they sat down and were served. It would seem that the Archduke was forgotten in the rush of questions.

Carl told the story of the play's acceptance. His father said, fatly:

"I have always told the boy to persevere." He turned to Arndt:

"See, now, Leopold; how much does a man make from a play?"

Arndt smiled faintly. He had been watching Pauli. Her eyes, her brilliant eyes, her tremulous color, the rosy blossom of her surrendered lips. He thought: "She is very like her mother . . . my little Pauli. . . . God bless her! Keep her safe. . . . Boy, if you aren't *good* to her. . . .

He answered Behrend at length:

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"That depends, August. Not that I know much about it. But it seems to me to turn on the question of the play's being a success. . . ."

Behrend said, impatiently:

"But of course it will be. What are you thinking of?"

"Carl and Pauli," Arndt answered. He saw that the two of them were engrossed in talk and laughter with Bruce and Mitzi.

Behrend waved his large, capable hand, the rings on it so imbedded in flesh that they had lost the heart to sparkle.

"Of course to that also. One has always known that. Well—what a day—Carl's birthday—the play—and a wife!"

Arndt said somberly:

"Yes. And a murder——"

Behrend flashed into rage again:

"Murder! Yes, a murder that may lead to war! Ah, the poor Emperor. What a day for him—what a day!"

The others looked at him in utter incredulity. Behrend insisted:

"Laugh, if you like. But the Serbians must be punished. They *must* be!"

Mitzi spoke, dejectedly:

"Oh, it will all end in an apology—see if it doesn't!"

Behrend made an impatient gesture.

"What good is an apology to an Emperor bereft of a son?"

Arndt looked up somberly.

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"And what good reprisals—taking other men's sons, hundreds of them, thousands of them? That would not breathe life into the Archduke, August!"

Behrend shook his head.

"You don't understand. This whole dreadful business is a conspiracy of the Slavs. The Balkan States are Russia's outposts, merely. Russia is an ally of Serbia, and the prime conspirator. Before we get through there may not only be a war, but it could conceivably include Russia."

At this impossible statement a little of the tension broke. Every one laughed, frankly disbelieving, except Arndt.

Arndt was thinking of Franz Joseph, of the tragedy that had followed him. First, the wife, Elizabeth of the ell-long black hair and the face like carven ivory; then the son, the tall son, dead in the hunting lodge, the girl by his side . . . and now this!

He pushed his plate from him, sickened. His eyes thoughtfully rested on his child and her chosen husband. He saw them look at each other, deeply; he saw them smile, secretly. He thought, "It can't touch them; how could it? Young, and hopeful hearted, and in love; *why* should it?"

Dinner, the belated, the interrupted, the magnificent dinner, was over. Mr. Behrend found a large chair into which he carefully inserted himself. He was puffing, he was magenta in the face with excitement, goose and Karlowitzer. He was also drowsy.

After a time Dr. Arndt beckoned Pauli and Carl into

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his study. Bruce and Mitzi were talking, Behrend slept with one eye open ready to deny to all accusers that he slept. In the study, book lined, shabby, comfortable, the three conspirators sat down. Arndt said:

"I needn't tell you how glad I am, and how much I love Pauli——how I pray for her happiness. I needn't tell you, Carl, that I trust you——"

They both kissed him; Pauli in her impetuous, loving, passionately grateful way, Carl simply and straightforwardly, in the old European fashion, customary between father and son, strange to English and American eyes perhaps—but singularly touching.

Dr. Arndt asked:

"And when are you children planning your marriage?"

Carl answered:

"As soon as possible."

Arndt flung out his hands in a gesture of resignation. He said, whimsically:

"Of course; but——"

Pauli told him hastily:

"We—oh, I shan't leave you so quickly, father—Carl was only joking——"

She looked appealingly at her lover. Her eyes said, "Don't you know I, too, am of your desire? Soon, *soon?* But he's old and I'm all he has. . . ."

Her father saw the look and correctly interpreted it. He said, smiling:

"Carl's face tells me that he isn't joking, Pauli. Well—what had you planned?"

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"A little flat," said Carl eagerly, "near here. Some furniture, just a few sticks you know, to start with——"

The professor smiled. He suggested, gently:

"Isn't there room, here, for the two of you? You could even have a little study. Bruce will soon be gone. There'll be his room. We could turn this old dining room of ours into a room for you—and use the living room. Surely it could be managed? I—shall miss my housekeeper, and—well, I'd not be in the way much, you know, what with the University—and the Coffee House."

Pauli flung herself on him. She cried:

"In the way . . . how can you say such a thing!"

"Child, I didn't say it."

Carl spoke, answering the look Pauli gave him, answering, too, his own grateful and affectionate heart:

"If you'd take us in, sir——"

"I don't as a rule advocate the parents living with the children," said Dr. Arndt, "but—in this case, you see, I will confess something: Carl, I wish to forestall your father. I am sure he will offer you his home, too. And I feel that it would be quieter here—for your work. And if I tell him that I cannot bear to have Pauli go—that the household will be at sixes and sevens without her—why perhaps I can make him see, without any offense, that——"

They broke off. They were smiling now. They had not foreseen this danger. There was thankfulness and relief in their faces.

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From the other room Behrend called out:

"It's time we went for our walk, and stopped at Ronacher's." He had awakened refreshed and ready. He was on his feet stamping with impatience when they came in.

Mitzi said:

"I'll leave a note for Fritz in case he comes back here. What shall I say?"

"Tell him the Third Coffee House—if he can get there before the theater, otherwise, Ronacher's. I'll leave his ticket in the box office."

"I've spoken to Baruska. She'll look after little Kurt and pop him in bed at the right time. So now it's settled. I'll run over and get my hat."

As they waited for her the violinist across the court laid his bow to the strings and played. They listened, Pauli and Carl, in a sort of dream. They didn't know what he played—a very simple waltz, instinct with vision, magical, sweet as lilacs in June and happy hearted as the birds. It was the very song of their hearts, of their betrothal.

Kurt, for once, was too replete with food to mind his mother's leaving him. Mitzi brought his toys back to the Arndts' and left him in the kitchen marching tin soldiers across the floor under the grave direction of Jans. Then they all set out, Bruce and Mitzi together, Pauli and Carl, Arndt and Behrend.

Reaching the theater and learning that no seventh ticket near their six was available, Behrend turned in all the tickets and with one large, spendthrift gesture, bought a box. He tucked the exchanged passports to

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amusement into his pocket with a most complacant smile. The box-office man asked:

"You've heard the tragic news?" and seemed a little crestfallen when Behrend nodded with a sobered face. The man continued:

"The murderer was a Serbian student, by the last bulletin. Doubtless, a madman, there was some talk of closing the theater . . . to-night, but it's Sunday, you understand, and well sold out. Moreover we'll have the latest bulletins announced from the stage, and a sort of—well, meeting. I understand the orchestra director has been working on a new song—a march—a defiance—to produce this evening. . . ."

"Very proper," murmured his patron, and joined the group which awaited him. After explaining about the box, with a certain sincere unction of manner, he spoke to Arndt and repeated the box-office information.

"A defiance, you get that, Leopold? For—this means war, mark you; war! Death to the Serbians! For the one life they took thousands of lives must pay!"

The professor said, thoughtfully:

"If Serbia fights, remember Russia is her ally."

Behrend shrugged his thick shoulders.

"What of that?"

They walked on, in silence.

The Prater was very lovely that warm, August afternoon. The tall trees clear green, a little breeze stirring their tall branches. Children ran about the paths, the place was crowded with people. People who did not talk and laugh and jostle as they generally did of a

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Sunday in the park—but people who stood in little groups, speaking earnestly. Now and then a man's voice was raised in indignation, or one saw an emotional woman weeping openly.

"Venice-in-Vienna," the little amusement park within a park, was preparing itself for the twofold amusements of the night: first, for the simpler population which came and was amused by simple things; then for the after-midnight crowd, the sophisticates who came to dance and flirt and forget—it would seem—their sophistication.

Behrend called a couple of open carriages—much like the passing victoria—into which he ushered his party. Bruce and Carl and Pauli in one, himself, Mitzi and Arndt in the other. They drove, through the miles of tree-lined avenue, turned at the circle, and drew up presently at the Third Coffee House.

An extra had come out. People in the Coffee House were reading little, damp squares of paper, passing them from hand to hand, to friends, to strangers. Carl possessed himself of one of these and read aloud, in that fresh young voice so remote from tragedy on this golden birthday, the details, such as had been ascertained, of the appalling thing that had happened—if these things ever do "happen," as the professor pondered to himself.

A Serbian schoolboy! And an Archduke!

The coffee came, in the tall glasses . . . pastry, too, rich, crumbly little cakes, puffs of paste filled with whipped cream. All about them people ate and drank, smacked greedy children, laughed, flirted, quarreled

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and talked, especially talked. Whole families sat at table—grandparents, parents, children—all talking; and to the professor's sensitiveness there was an undercurrent of something very dark and swift under the conversation—loud, angry, sorrowful conversation, bewailing, mourning, guessing, excited, half morbid. He thought, holding the flimsy extra in his hand, not seeing the blurred lines of black print but feeling their menace, "It is as if the boy—that unknown Serbian student—had touched a spark to a fuse, had drawn aside a curtain on a dark stage, lit only with torches. . . ."

Presently they drove back again. At Ronacher's they left the ticket for Fritz and pushed their way through the milling torrential crowds to the box in the horseshoe. A great theater, all red and gold, the orchestra tuning up, the leader pale with excitement, his hair tossed off his forehead.

They ordered their supper which would presently be served at the table back of the box. They settled in their places and looked down over the people. The curtain went up, to music.

The music-hall people did their turns. There were singers, acrobats, jugglers, a foreigner or two. The music crashed and blared all around them. The audience was restless, moving as one person, like a bright-colored beast, hydra-headed. Now and then the manager came out between the acts to announce that no further news had come over the wires. . . .

Fritz came at suppertime, in the intermission. He sat down with them, ate ravenously, received the news of the engagement with an abstract smile, a word or

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two of felicitation, pulled from his pocket the proof sheets of the announcement of Bergman's acceptance of the play and tossed them to Carl. Winckleman was white with fatigue and lit with excitement. All day he had been in the mad, sweating frenzy of the newspaper office, had been out on the streets—had been in the telegraph offices. His voice was hoarse with smoke and talk. His throat ached, his hands shook with nervousness. He saw tragedy, he foresaw worse; but it was news! *news!*

He told them all he had found out, which wasn't much more than the bare, and quiet accurate, details of the extras. He said:

"There's talk, in the city, of its coming to war. Austria can't take that from Serbia and sit still——"

Pauli looked at him wonderingly. She said:

"It isn't possible!"

"Why not? Do you think an apology will mend it? If a ruffian shot down your Carl, there, in cold blood, without excuse, with premeditation—oh, it was premeditated!—would you be satisfied to have him say, 'I beg your pardon'?"

His tone was savage with irony. Now he looked about the table. Carl was, plainly, distressed, Bruce grave. Mitzi's eyes hung on her husband's; the professor looked—old, suddenly. Behrend nodded his big, square head—in approval. Pauli said, doubtfully:

"But no—he'd have to pay, of course."

"Ah, there you are!" cried Fritz. "But you'd not feel quite satisfied even then, would you? You'd wonder who'd put him up to it. You'd want to get them

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too. In this case, which isn't the case of a plain private citizen like Carl, do you think the country will be content if Serbia hangs her little student? Do you really think that?"

There was a silence. Behrend broke it with a single oath:

"No, by God!"

The performance had begun again. The little, dapper manager was announcing a new song composed by the orchestra leader and the city's best known popular song writer. Sung by—they lost the name.

The music crashed into a martial beat, reminiscent of a thousand marching songs. The voice of the baritone rose full and strong . . . swung out, almost a tangible thing, over the heads of the audience—a fine voice, daring as a flung flag:

"We're going to rush the Russians!"

There was a dead silence; a deadly silence. Then a roar. The many-headed, many-throated beast, in its bright trappings, its frocks and uniforms, its jewels and decorations, its soberer black of civilian clothes, swayed from side to side. The singer threw back his head—and sang, full-throated, over the roar and beyond. At the end of the chorus the beast of the audience had caught the swing and the simple words. The audience sang:

"We're going to rush the Russians!"

At Behrend's table Mitzi was singing, and Fritz with her. Now Behrend, Bruce and Carl and Pauli beat time with their feet, quite unconsciously. But presently Bruce said, close in the professor's ear:

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"I say—isn't that going it a bit strong, already?—a little premature, you know?"

Arndt nodded, heavily. Mitzi cried out, leaning far over the horseshoe ledge, her eyes on a man, a madman who was standing up on a table back of another box screaming the words of the song:

"Oh! oh! isn't it *thrilling!*"

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CHAPTER EIGHT

WALKING home through the restless street-corner crowds upon whose feverish activities the stars looked down in bright, ironic indifference, Carl spoke to Pauli:

"If there's war——"

She held her breath; waited.

"I said—I'd never fight. I mean it."

He added, after a pause:

"I'm an officer of the reserve. But, I'll *not* fight, Pauli."

She was still silent. She wanted to say: "How supremely silly! War? Why, it's not possible. These statesmen, they'll settle it somehow. But there seemed to be a tight noose about her throat, hurting her, choking back speech. Carl had said that he wouldn't fight. Yet . . .

Danger was somehow in the very air about her. She spoke now, so loudly and clearly that some passers-by turned their heads to look at her curiously:

"Carl, can't we be married—soon—at once?"

For an instant they stood quite still looking into one another's grave face. He asked eagerly:

"You—would? You mean that, Pauli?"

"Oh, yes," she told him simply as a child. "Yes, Carl."

He took her hand and held it in his own. Then they

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walked on, each aware of the terrible loneliness of the human soul, of the separateness of lover from lover, yet each childishly comforted by the warm touch of the other's hand.

Behrend and his son left the group at the doors of the Hahngasse house. Mitzi and Fritzi parted from them on a landing. Bruce and Pauli and the professor went on into the cool dimness of the apartment where only one light was burning. The professor held Bruce's hand in his a long moment before saying good night. He said, "These are bad times, my boy—" and Bruce knew that Arndt was not referring solely to the murder of the Archduke. He knew that Arndt knew of his own wounds, and he clasped the friendly hand hard.

He went to his room. Pauli faced her father, with the beautiful integrity of her spirit in her eyes. She said:

"We've changed our plans. We want to be married as soon as possible . . . very quietly . . . I—I'm afraid——"

He did not try to reassure her with hollow words. He knew—better than Pauli—that she had reason to fear. He said, simply:

"Very well, my child——"

He kissed her, held her close. He prayed, without much hope—"Lord, let this cup pass from her!" He watched her walk lightly, her head held high, to her own room. He sat down by the center table and took his white head in his hands. It seemed to him that he could hear, in his heart, the footsteps of the world, as it marched. That march was called "progress."

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Now, he thought, it marches to a doom it calls "glory."

He shook this from him, rose, extinguished the light, and went into his small, austere bedroom. On the walls were pictures of Pauli and of her mother. On the table by his bed, a beautiful little bronze of Dante which Bruce had brought him from a vacation in Italy. He looked at the eagle features, cast in the endurance of metal. He thought of the hells that Dante knew, of the other hells which men prepared for themselves.

Not far from him Bruce slept—no, lay awake in the warm, covering darkness. It seemed to Arndt that he could feel the unhappy thoughts of the Englishman. Arndt liked Bruce Gordon; he more than liked him, he would have been happy to have given Pauli into his safe, inarticulate keeping. But it had always been Carl—always—and there had never been any hope for Bruce. After all, Carl was one of them; he would not take Pauli away, to another country. Perhaps it was better—yet, the professor sighed, lying there in the dark. So many people being hurt in the world, every hour, every minute. He thought again, "Age has its compensations, in cool blood, in resignation. . . ."

Bruce thought, in the room near his friend, "Well, I might as well go on home . . . but it looks as if they might need me . . . who knows? If there's a war, they'll need me here. I can stay as long as I'm needed . . . Pauli, Pauli—if only you could have loved me . . . !"

Of the three, it was she who slept. Slept with a hand under her cheek and a smile just touching her

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mouth, her blind terror forgotten. Carl loved her, she loved Carl. They would be married, they would always be together; what could touch them, really?

Carl slept, too, in his father's home. He had told Behrend that he and Pauli would soon be married. And Behrend had said, weightily, "As a rule I don't advise haste. But this is a troubled time. You'll live with me, of course?"

Carl evaded that. He knew that Arndt could handle the situation better than himself. The important thing was to hurry the marriage. He thought of Pauli and of his play. He slept; and once, out of his happy and unforeboding dreams, he laughed aloud. He dreamed that his play was being presented, that the curtain had fallen on the great, speaking silence of homage; that the silence was broken by a shout of his name, a clamor and a demand. He dreamed that he came out on the stage, without terror, and spoke to the people. That he looked up and saw Pauli leaning from a box, her eyes on his. . . .

Happy Carl!

Wires were pulled, legalities attended to—Pauli and Carl were married very shortly. The Wincklemans were there, Dr. Arndt, Behrend, Bruce, some friends of the professor's from the University, a girl friend or two of Pauli's, half a dozen students. After the wedding none save the original birthday party returned to Arndt's for the simple supper. There was a good deal of friendly joking and some tears. . . .

Pauli and Carl went away for a few days. They found a quiet primitive little inn not far from Schoen-

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brunn, and there they stayed, discovering each other, adventuring in beauty and in wonder. And came back—Dr. Arndt having arranged everything with the slightly insulted Behrend—to the old flat on the Hahngasse.

For the time being, at any rate, they made their room in the old dining room. Baruska could serve the meals in the living room, using the door into the corridor. The professor had wished to give up his study, but they wouldn't hear of it; and as for Bruce, why, of course he must stay, as long as he could. He couldn't leave them now . . . besides, said Pauli earnestly, his room is *far* too small!

So the changes were made and in a week it was as if they had always been. Carl had seen Bergman, was working all day on a final repolishing up of the play, on a draft of a new one, working in the professor's study when Arndt was at the University, or in the bedroom when he was at home. Pauli sang about her household occupations all day long. . . . Baruska bustled about, important at serving two men instead of one, and happy because Jan was there. An old storage room had been turned into quarters for him. Jan could not be parted from Carl, that much had been settled in the beginning. Bruce browsed about, often absenting himself for the whole day, sometimes going with the professor to the Continental Coffee House to drink a glass of coffee and read the papers. Gordon loved the Coffee House. He told himself it would be one of the things he'd miss most when he got home: the dark marble of floor and columns, the lit-

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tle balcony with the three-piece orchestra, the shabby red plush, the smell of coffee and pastry and tobacco smoke, the groups of men, holding the papers clamped into the pieces of wood with the long handles, the little round tables, the domino and chess playing, the babble of voices. . . .

Fortunes were made and lost in the Continental Coffee House. Friendships were formed, never to be disrupted. News was passed from mouth to mouth, from friend to stranger. Arguments were heard, loud and hasty, ending in "anither glass, waiter," and laughter. The place was packed with life, with the almost tangible sense of thought and hope and expectation. And Arndt never missed his hour there. It was his club so to speak, an intergral part of his life.

The Coffee House was more than ever astir these days. The storm clouds were gathering, very black, heavy, pregnant with horror. And on July twenty-eight, five days after her ultimatum had been sent, Austria Hungary declared war on Serbia.

That was a great day in the Continental Coffee House! Arndt, Carl and Bruce were there, watching the clustered groups. They saw a young actor with the carven face of a boyish Cæsar spring upon a table and fling his resonant voice out over the throng in the dramatic poem, "The Young Lieutenant." There were cheers, and songs. The orchestra crashed into the National Anthem. The men stood up in the blue clouds of smoke, and down the faces of many the bright tears ran unchecked.

Carl was restless. His father-in-law and friend

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watched him, marked how the color came and went in his face, how his eyes shone with the contagious fever, how his lips tightened. Against his convictions, against his ideals, his theories, the slow relentless force was sweeping him out into the current. His dramatic sense was fully aroused. When a group of men passed their table one whom he knew slightly pulled at Carl's arm, and he rose and followed to another larger table where a group of students sang and shouted. Arndt and Bruce sat quite still. Presently, above the uproar, they heard Carl's clear voice raised, singing with the others. They saw him stumble to his feet, clamber to a table, waving a flag someone had thrust into his hand. And silently, as if by common consent, they turned their eyes away from his half-mad face, closed their ears to his shouts and presently left the place together.

The professor confided, half ashamed:

"The mob spirit! I had to hold myself back from . . . screaming and shouting too. Bruce, it is a terrible thing, this herd hysteria."

The Englishman answered gravely:

"It almost got me, too."

They walked on, each with his personal preoccupation. Arndt remarked, dully:

"Carl will go——"

Each thought of Pauli and was silent.

Before they reached home Arndt turned to his companion.

"I've an errand I must attend to," he told him, "I will join you later."

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He hurried off to a picture dealer on the Ringstrasse. He was going to sell one of his beloved pictures. Word had reached him that morning that he had lost his seat at the University. They did not, it appeared, like his attitude toward the war. With the country in such chaos they could not afford to have their professors preaching peace. So Arndt must go—a sacrifice to the war spirit. He was terribly troubled. And although hopeful of finding employment somewhere, he knew that with his income cut off suddenly he must take steps to fill in the gap between his dismissal and his nebulous future earnings. Hence, the picture must go. It hurt him. Which one? It was hard to know which he could spare. He loved them all. And he must be secretive about it, he couldn't bear to tell Pauli . . . yet.

Bruce went home. He looked about the empty living room, and listened. He heard Pauli's voice from the kitchen and smiled as he sat down to fill his pipe. When Carl came home he would work again on his play and Pauli would copy what he had accomplished, in her more experienced fashion. Bruce looked round the room again. In place of the bookcase, the sideboard bulked. Books lay upon it, rubbing elbows with china and silverware. The small table stood in front of the great tiled stove, with the "Winged Victory" upon it.

The doors to the bedroom were open. The new maple bed was between the two windows, the room was bright with new curtains and lamps, new toilet articles on the dresser—Pauli's wedding presents.

Bruce thought of the professor's words—"Carl will

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go." He rose, sighed heavily and went down the corridor to his room. As he went he wondered, idly, what the professor's errand had been. He thought, "they know, of course, about the declaration, Carl and Pauli. I wonder how they've taken it?"

But at dinner her eyes were dry and her mouth steady. Above the small talk which cloaked each person's inner preoccupation they could hear the cheering in the streets. Carl said, gloomily:

"That noise! I couldn't write a line, I was so distracted; and it's too hot to shut the windows."

In the silence the storm clouds gathered.

August 4th. . . .

Late in the afternoon of August 4th, Mitzi Winckleman was leaning her little body out of Pauli's bedroom window in the Arndt flat. The sound of cheerng, of marching, of bands, came faintly into the rooms. Nearer, the sound of the unknown violinist's instrument, playing an old marching sound. The professor was sitting at a cleared end of the center table in the living room trying to write, with a large book propped up in front of him. The other end of the table was set for supper. On the table with the "Winged Victory" stood a tall kerosene lamp—electric light had gone. On the walls where a nude had hung, one of the professor's best and most admired pictures, there was a bright red space—unfaded, unmatching the color of the rest of the walls. Once Arndt looked up at it, shook his head and sighed.

Mitzi's small cheering stopped. She turned from the window and came down the room, pulled up a chair

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and sat close to him. Arndt pushed back his work and regarded her.

"I do wish our windows were on the street! Isn't it glorious? Not a break in the line since early afternoon. Why don't they march up this street, close? And where is Kurt? I haven't been able to do a thing with him. He runs wild on the street all day long."

Arndt filled his pipe. Mitzi looked at him in disapproval.

"How can you sit there so calmly when the whole country is ablaze?"

"You'll all be calm enough in a year or two," said the professor. Mitzi's mouth straightened into a tight red line. She said, almost angrily:

"Your calm will get you into trouble, Fritz says."

"How so?"

"The University. It's no time for pacifists."

Arndt laughed a little, picked up a pencil and drew his block of paper toward him again. He said:

"No. Once war is in the blood a nation spells reason with a T."

Mitzi looked at the book he had taken up. She asked, scornfully:

"What's that—a pacifist book?"

"The worst of all pacifist books—the Bible."

Mitzi looked at him curiously. She was beginning to wonder if the professor's mind hadn't been a little touched. Fritz said—well, of course she was fond of Dr. Arndt and devoted to Pauli—but one couldn't be too careful now—still, it would be unpleasant to have to break with her friends. She asked:

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"Are you copying from the Bible?"

He nodded.

"The worst of all pacifist lines—*thou shalt not kill.*"

Pauli came in, a drab bundle over her arm, a uniform. She had changed since her marriage, Mitzi thought, looking at her: that subtle difference; and her face showed marks of anxiety and of distress, which could not efface, however, the shining happiness in her eyes, the curve, happiness itself, of her mouth.

Her father said to Mitzi:

"A man who uttered those words to-day would be sent to prison."

Mitzi looked up at Pauli, her little face puzzled.

"But that just means, killing *someone*——"

The professor smiled. He asked, ridiculously:

"I see. You think it was written for the retail trade!"

"Oh, bother!" said Mitzi, crossly. "One can't argue with you—you're as bad as a lawyer, or a journalist. Pauli, here I am back again. I can't keep away from that window. Listen; isn't that more music?"

She ran to the window and called over her shoulder:

"Pauli! The Hungarians. Come Pauli!"

Pauli had sat down, had taken a thimble and needle and thread from a workbag. The heavy stuff on which she sewed dragged through her fingers.

"I want to fix Carl's uniform."

"Do you think it will stay nice?" Mitzi asked, catching her breath.

"I don't think anything will," said Pauli, in so hope-

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less a tone that Mitzi's kind little heart smote her. She said, quickly:

"Fritz says they'll never get to him and Carl."

Pauli looked over at her father. She said, appealing to that court which had never failed her, "Father?" But Arndt only shrugged his shoulders and puffed furiously at his pipe. Pauli got up and went to him, rumpling his hair with her hand.

"You old locomotive!" she said.

Arndt took the hand and held it.

"Are you glad we were able to hurry the marriage?"

She stood there, very straight and slim. She said, in a clear voice, a voice that sang:

"If they'll wait five days, I'll have had a whole month of happiness!"

She went back to her sewing. The Professor said:

"Four nations against us!"

Mitzi spoke:

"Four?"

"Serbia, Russia, France, and now Belgium!"

"And all without the least cause!" she said.

"But *we* had cause?" he asked her.

She tossed her head a little. "Certainly!"

"Do you know what it was?" he inquired, gravely.

"The cause of the war? Of course. They killed the Archduke."

"Oh—yes," said Arndt.

She leaned back against the sill, triumphant with a new idea, safely past the danger mark. She asked:

"Why didn't *they* remember 'Thou shalt not kill'? How about *other people* obeying the Commandments?"

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He answered:

"Maybe the trouble with our religion is that it asks too much of human nature. If you tell a man his health depends upon eating more moderately he's likely to *try*. But if you say, 'Eat nothing,' he answers, 'That's fine: but, of course, it's impossible.' The Koran asks less and is obeyed more."

Mitzi turned back to her window, obviously bored by all this solemn talk. Pauli said:

"There's nothing difficult about Christ. . . ."

"That's different," Arndt told her. "Wouldn't everything be different if we had preached Christ instead of Christianity? The simple things He said instead of all the twistings and turnings and little side alleys of creed and theology? If we hadn't spent these centuries building up a great hocus-pocus instead of a great truth?"

"Father!" exclaimed Pauli.

"'For God and King!'" Arndt quoted. "But between them and us, from the days when we began building palaces for our Bishops and pyramids for our Kings, have come that multitude of interpreters and exploiters who live by the mummery they have made of Religion and Patriotism! . . . Blasphemy and treason; but I sometimes think the two vast conspiracies through all history have been God and King!"

Pauli said, knitting her brows:

"You believe we should—uncrown our kings?"

"Not all of them wear crowns," her father told her, "and perhaps those who do not, are the worst."

Baruska came in with a supper tray and a news-

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paper. She set the tray down near the professor, too close for his comfort. She said, as the music from a passing band struck in through the windows:

"Oh, it's wonderful! See, all the beautiful soldiers!"

Pauli laughed, and asked teasingly:

"You spoke just that way about the goose, with their great round brown bellies. . . . Go on, say the rest of it, Baruska!"

Baruska shook with laughter. She picked up a carving knife and held it pointed.

"Don't tease, Miss Pauli! When I see the flags and uniforms I could whip those Rumanians, all by myself!"

The professor leaned back in his chair and chuckled.

"Fine idea, very patriotic, Baruska. But you see we aren't fighting the Rumanians!"

Baruska's face fell. She said, ruefully:

"No? Well, never mind! I could fight anybody!"

She dropped the knife with a crash. Arndt started and looked at her. Pauli asked:

"Where were you—about an hour ago, Baruska? I needed you."

"I went out, to mail a letter, and the troops were going by. We ran along after them, men, women and children. We had flowers. I snatched some from someone as I ran. No one cared. We cried and sang and shouted and laughed, and kissed the men when we stopped at a corner. It was wonderful!"

Mitzi called from the window:

"Come, Pauli. You're missing it all. Just come for a minute."

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"I wish I *could* miss it," Pauli said. Her father looked at her.

"Go ahead," he said, laughing, "or Mitzi will fling herself out in disappointment."

Pauli sighed, got up and joined Mitzi. Baruska took a step forward, but the professor said:

"Give me the paper."

He opened it, tossed it aside.

"An early edition, and lies, anyway."

Baruska looked up at the empty space on the wall. She asked:

"Another gone? Where's the naked lady?"

"At the framer's," he answered, looking toward Pauli anxiously.

Baruska laughed.

"She ought to be ashamed, the hussy." She picked up some books and took them to the table where the "Winged Victory" stood, caught in her marble. Baruska pointed at it with a broad red thumb. "There," she said, "that's the one I like. What's it made of, sir?"

Arndt rose and followed her. He answered:

"Of marble."

Baruska said:

"It's a pity it's broken."

The professor smiled. He answered, patiently:

"It's not broken, Baruska. The 'Winged Victory.' And Victory, is always mutilated."

Baruska sighed. Something in the heaviness of her soul and body was stirred by the sight of those great wings, was lifted. She said, wistfully:

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"I'd like one."

The professor answered, absently:

"Well, why not, some day? There are good copies in plaster. You could earn one, *if you worked on the farm*—your father's farm, and paid off the mortgage."

Baruska looked at him in bovine amazement.

"Seven thousand crowns! Not in a lifetime. I'll stay here."

"We may not be able to keep you," Arndt said, in a lowered voice. "We may have to have the interest money instead. Between ourselves, Baruska, I'm in trouble at the University, but we'll say no more now. Not a word before Miss Pauli."

As he spoke Pauli left the window.

"No—no. It's terrible!" she said.

"The music?" asked Mitzi following.

"No, Mitzi, the tramping feet."

Mitzi listened. She said:

"The song we heard at Ronacher's! You hear? One hears it all over now——"

Baruska, setting the table, raised her shrill voice. She sang, heartily:

"We're going to rush the Russians!"

Pauli turned to her father. She said:

"I *wish* we hadn't moved into the dining room."

"You would never have fitted in your own little room, dear," he told her. "As it is, I suppose we'll have soldiers quartered on us. They'll take your old room, and Bruce's when he goes—and even my study, I'm afraid."

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"I know. Oh, Mitzi! do come and close those doors!"

Mitzi obeyed, sulkily. But in a minute it seemed as if the drum beats had come into the very house. The hall door opened and Kurt marched in, beating on his drum with inexpert but wholehearted blows.

Mitzi said, "For mercy's sake!" and took the sticks from her reluctant offspring. And Kurt looked at her in pained bewilderment.

"What's a drum for?" he asked, reasonably.

Pauli took the child in her arms, laughing.

"Well; what if Bruce had given you the sword?" she asked him.

The professor, now that Baruska had left him, was reading his paper. Mitzi looked over his shoulder.

"Why don't you read Fritz's paper?" she asked. "He writes things, every day, that makes you want to fight—anybody. Out of his own head, too!"

Pauli was back at her sewing. She tightened a button, and asked:

"Is there news of England?"

"They warn us to keep out of Belgium. See, here's a bulletin, printed after the other news, the latest. We have attacked Liége."

"Good!" cried Mitzi. And then, in a rather crestfallen voice, inquired: "Where's that?"

"In Belgium. The Germans invaded it—to-day."

"When is Bruce going?" asked Mitzi, her hostile eyes on the picture of Gordon, still draped in the flag.

"Monday."

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"Strange of him to wait," said Mitzi insinuatingly, "so long."

"He didn't know there'd be this war," Pauli defended him.

Mitzi looked dubious. She said, with apparent irrelevance:

"Fritz says the country's overrun with spies. You know the little Russian jeweler in the Kartnerstrasse? Well, he wasn't doing any business, but he stayed. A crowd broke in his shop yesterday and found hundreds of letters, in Russian. They wrecked the place, and last night they found the man, hanging. He'd killed himself."

"Oh, Mitzi!" said Pauli, shuddering.

"Well anyway, he was only a Jew! Take my advice; tell Bruce to leave at once!"

"Never!" said Pauli. *"Never!"*

Mitzi picked up the picture. She said:

"This is no time for English flags."

Pauli looked at her friend, more amused than angry.

"Little fire-eater! I put that there years ago. Bruce is our friend."

"We have no friends—except Germans," said Mitzi; and if you're not loyal to your country you might be to your husband!"

Her voice shook, tears of anger stood in her eyes. Pauli looked at her in astonishment. The professor laid down his paper.

"Come, children," he said gently, "don't quarrel like this. As for the little Russian, here's the news about

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him. There were only two letters, they've been translated. They were from his wife. They said she was glad he loved his new country and hoped to come to him as soon as he could send for her. However—as you say—we've no friends! Even at home, we're people of different races, different religions."

Mitzi was unconvinced.

"Ten to one that was all a blind, a code." She beckoned Kurt, took up the drums he had been playing with, handed him the sticks. "Come, son—we'll go get father's supper . . . we love him—don't we?—and our country?"

"Someone," said the professor, gravely, "is saying that—those words, to-night . . . in France!"

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CHAPTER NINE

PAULI's eyes misted suddenly. There was a little silence, broken by Kurt's small, cheerful voice raised in the prevalent "we're going to rush the Russians." His mother took his hand and led him to the door. Once when he faltered in the words of the verse she prompted him, defiantly:

"No nation that opposes us—has not an earthly chance."

The door shut. The two voices, the child's voice, the mother's, were heard in the hall for a moment. Then silence.

Pauli touched the uniform with absent fingers. Her body shook. She tried to speak, found, to her detached amazement, that she could not. When the words finally came they were simple words, words that were to become a commonplace all over the world. She said:

"Father! I can't let him go!"

The professor was deep in thought. He pulled himself up, his mind reverted to the conversation about Gordon. So he asked, wondering:

"Bruce?"

She shook her head—for Pauli, almost impatiently:

"No, no! Carl. If anything happened to Carl *now* —just for an Archduke—whom nobody liked anyway! My country is you—and my home—and my husband.

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I don't care who gets to the Adriatic—why should I?"

The professor looked at her. Why should she? Gentle, small and beseeching she sat there. Such a little thing! Life had no right to hurt her! But life is no respecter of persons. He sighed and said with, he felt, false security:

"It will soon be over, dear——"

"How soon?"

"The Franco-Prussian war was finished in ten months——"

"Ten months!"

In ten months the face of the world would be changed for Pauli. In ten months she would have borne her child. The knowledge of this she had kept from her father and Carl. It was only very recently that she had known. And furthermore her heart said, "ten months—ten centuries." So much could happen in ten months. In ten minutes of every hour, in every second of ten minutes. It didn't even take long for a bullet to find its mark, did it? Carl! She thought, "If he's spared, what will it do to him? All the horror and ugliness, with his passion for beauty and truth, his sensitiveness, and his ideals? Ten months. . . ."

The bell rang importantly. Baruska entered in high spirits, her face flushed, her hands coiled in her apron. Pauli said, low:

"Father—I'm so afraid——"

"Hush," he said, motioning toward the passing maid. But Pauli rushed on, crying out unheedingly:

"Am I selfish, father? Am I wicked? I only want to know what it's all about!"

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"Mr. Behrend!" announced Baruska.

The professor started. Life arranged curious dramatic effects. For Baruska had answered Pauli's question unconsciously.

Behrend was admitted. He came in, smiling and self-confident. He was very smartly dressed, excellently groomed, and he exuded prosperity as the octupus exudes ink.

Pauli turned aside a moment, bent her head over her neglected sewing. Her face felt—not like her own face, she thought, bewildered—all tense, and drawn . . . stiff with an emotion which was part physical. She tried to order it into its usual lines, its plasticity.

"Any news from England?" asked the professor.

"The usual warnings—however, they'll not fight," Behrend announced, finding a chair; "no one fights for a principle."

Arndt looked at the other man gravely. He said definitely:

"We have no right to cross Belgium——"

Behrend laughed shortly. He countered:

"Wouldn't France, if we didn't? It's a case of who gets there first. France has been preparing for fifty years. And we must defend ourselves."

Arndt made a sound like a groan. He said:

"Yes; and they're probably saying the same thing in France. In all history, no nation ever attacked another."

"France dreams of Napoleon and world dominion," Behrend instructed him, "while England—is the cause of everything."

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"Explain that to Pauli!" interrupted Arndt with a sort of grim humour.

Behrend's eyes followed his friend's to the quiet girl. He seemed to observe her for the first time since his entrance. He smiled across the room at her, spoke her name in greeting; and the professor demanded:

"Tell her what we're fighting for. She just asked me."

Behrend swelled with importance. His heavy voice became ceremonial. He said:

"For our national honor!"

Arndt laughed outright. He argued:

"Didn't you just say that nobody fought for a principle?"

"Nobody but us," Behrend answered, hastily. "England's motive is sheer jealousy. She cannot compete with us commercially, hence we must be removed. And unless French militarism is checked we'll live to see another Bonaparte in Vienna. Where's Carl?"

"He's out," Pauli said, her voice and features under control, "looking for news——"

"I'll just wait for him," his father said, stretching luxuriously, "in case——"

Pauli began to shake again. She asked, appealingly:

"You don't think that he'll be called?"

"Not unless England enters—and she won't. But a man of my years can't be dragged out of his bed to say good-by. Arndt, age is a tragedy; we are too old, you and I! Thank God, I have a son."

"A very proper sentiment," said Arndt, dryly.

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Behrend's eyes shone. He said, in an eager and stentorian voice:

"What a glorious end—to die for one's country!"

Arndt's mouth twitched with distaste. He said, clearly:

"Oh, yes; I've heard it spoken of highly by people who don't do it."

Brehend's mouth jarred open. Pauli's eyes were reproachfully on her father. He mustn't quarrel with Behrend, she thought, panicky.

"August," remarked Arndt, before Behrend could answer him, "I've a plan to end all wars!"

Behrend's bushy eyebrows rose. He asked, skeptically:

"How?"

"By making the men who declare 'em fight 'em."

Pauli rose to go. Behrend said, soberly:

"How can you joke on such a subject?" He came heavily to his feet, crossed the room. "Pauli?" he said.

"Yes, Mr. Behrend?"

"Call me father," said Behrend, superbly, lifting Carl's uniform from the chair on which she had laid it. "Are you proud of your husband, Pauli?"

Her mouth straightened into a thin line. She said, evenly:

"Yes. I still believe that he is a great author."

She went out of the room. A little silence followed. Behrend shook his head, somberly. Such—spirit. He didn't like it. Influences were at work here. Not good influences. Arndt watched the other man, followed the

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processes of his ponderous thought, and half regretted his own acerbity and Pauli's. What was the use? They spoke a different language from Behrend's. He'd never understand. Arndt asked:

"You'll stay to supper with us, of course?"

Behrend looked austere. He answered, firmly:

"No, no—couldn't think of troubling you." His light, rather protruding eyes wandered over the set table. It had an inviting look and Behrend was a man of appetite, a good trencherman. He amended:

"Well, yes, then; since you urge me!"

"That's good. We've some left-overs, as you see, and a glass or two of beer," the professor said, filling his pipe and not seeing the look of disappointment which passed over Behrend's broad face. "We must eat while we can," he continued. "England may shut off supplies."

Behrend drew up a chair. He said:

"Two can play at that game! Without supplies we can exist a year, England but a month. And we have submarines."

Arndt shook his head, set his pipe going. He said:

"But they can't sink merchant ships—with women and children!"

"Why not?" asked Behrend. "Necessity knows no law."

Arndt looked at him indignantly. He said, shrugging:

"Bosh!"

"*Really,* Arndt!" Behrend accused him; "your senti-

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ments hardly do you credit. By the way I hear you already are in trouble at the University."

"Hush," Arndt implored him, "I don't want Pauli to hear. . . . So you've heard, have you? News travels——"

"You've been dismissed then?" asked Behrend, not without satisfaction, as one who should say, "I foretold it!"

"I have resigned," Arndt told him.

Behrend drew himself up, wagged his head solemnly, and pronounced the verdist.

"Disgraceful!" he said.

Arndt misunderstood. He asked, eagerly:

"Isn't it? When murder is taught in schools and preached in churches!"

Behrend swelled, outraged.

"Murder!" he repeated, incredulously.

"Yes. With God as the Great Accessory!" Arndt continued bitterly.

Behrend looked alarmingly apoplectic. He ejaculated *"Arndt!"* in so warning a tone that the professor looked up, startled. Then he smiled.

"I beg your pardon! Yet I'm not the only one. Muller still works on his cancer cure—still risks death to *save* life."

"Muller's an old ass!" remarked Behrend. "And now —*you*—with no income. How will you manage?"

"We're cutting down," said Arndt, cheerfully. "I don't mind. But Pauli mustn't do without meat. And there's the premium on my insurance."

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"You carry too much. I've always said so."

Arndt nodded.

"I suppose so. It has meant sacrifice, but I'll be safe in my old age and have something for Pauli. Three more payments only and we'll receive twenty-five thousand crowns."

"All well and good," answered the man of business; "but meanwhile, you must live—what . . ." His quick eyes caught the professor's glance as it went to the empty wall space, the space that was so unfaded.

"I'll get work—somewhere—of sorts," Arndt said, hastily, to cover what he felt was a betrayal. But he was too late. Behrend said, slowly:

"I see. You've sold a picture."

Arndt laughed, shrugged his shoulders, said, with an effort at lightness:

"What of it? A hussy."

Behrend's heart, not entirely atrophied, smote him. He looked angry because he felt emotional. He said, brusquely:

"Damn it, Leopold—we're related. How about a little loan?"

Arndt's face darkened. He said, uncertainly:

"Thanks. But I—never borrow."

His heart felt a little lighter. He thought, "He's right, we are related; and he can spare it; for Pauli's sake I might make an exception."

"I'd never feel it," Behrend told him. He looked about the room, listened to hear if he caught footsteps, lowered his voice and explained: "You see, that wheat you told me to buy——"

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"I told you to buy!" repeated Arndt, in amazement. "When you asked me the hypothetical question? I told you!"

He broke off, in sheer astonishment. Behrend went on, unheeding:

"Yes. Soon after the war came. Soldiers must eat. We had the grain. All very simple. I can well afford a little loan."

Arndt's face was set. He said, very surely and clearly:

"Thank you—no!"

He lifted a hand to stem Behrend's inevitable argument as a key turned in the door and Carl came in. Behrend's hand was in his pocket, crackling the crisp notes, jingling the change. He said with a fulsome affection:

"Ah, my boy!"

"Hello, father! 'Evening, Professor. Where's Pauli?"

"In the kitchen, I think. No bad news?"

Something of the excitement of the street mob lay upon Carl. He carried the atmosphere of the milling hundreds with him. He had a keyed-up look, a touch of bravado, and in some subtle way he seemed coarsened, as if by contact with brutal people. He answered:

"The British Ambassador has been mobbed in Berlin!"

"Nonsense!" said his father. "That's a *canard*. We don't do such things—or our allies either."

"He was a spy!" Carl shot out, defiantly.

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"Even if it's true," Behrend pursued, "nothing will come of it. And next week we'll be in Paris."

Carl went to the bedroom, and opened the door. The sound of the tramping feet came into the room, filled it. Carl said:

"Yes, I suppose the whole thing's as good as over."

Arndt spoke for the first time. His face was drawn in lines of inexpressible sorrow, impersonal sorrow. He asked:

"And what was it all about, Carl?"

Carl started. The catchwords of the street, of the press, came easily to his lips. He answered, hotly:

"We fought for civilization, for liberty, and democracy!"

Behrend brought his palms together in a gesture of applause. Arndt said, quietly:

"I see——"

"You don't deny Justice is on our side?" Carl asked his father-in-law, directly.

"Justice is always on our side," said Arndt—"whichever side that happens to be——"

Carl's attention wandered from Arndt. His were grasshopper thoughts these days. Emotional and poetical, swayed by every passing wind of drama, caught up by moods, yielding to the sweep of the whirlwind, Carl was changing his ideas as quickly as he had always changed his humors. Mercurial as ever, he said soberly following his own line of thought:

"Yes. As good as over now. Fritz will be heartbroken at not being needed."

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"We won't forget men like Fritz," promised Behrend comfortably.

"Tears were in my eyes," said Carl, standing straight and slim between the two rooms, "as I stood, just now, on the corner, and watched Youth march by. Perhaps it is true that war—struggle—keeps the race strong."

"There are many kinds of strength," Arndt broke in, "I recall, as a young man traveling in Spain——"

"There's a degenerate country!" Behrend interrupted him; and Arndt nodded and went on:

"—seeing horses ripped open by a tortured bull. Yes, I remember that. And they told me such fighting kept the race strong."

Behrend shook his head.

"That's no anology. To mutilate wretched horses—that's mere barbarism."

Arndt looked across at his friend. He said, with great quiet:

"And to mangle a million men, to stab and tear and blow them to bits . . . that is War!"

Carl shrugged. He argued:

"But the bull fights ignorantly, without knowing why."

"Yes," Arndt agreed, "he's so—stupid. Someone waves a red flag and he charges that, ignoring the real enemy behind it. But here comes Pauli to announce supper."

"Not yet," said Pauli, coming in. Her eyes flew, straight as homing birds, to Carl. "Well—Carl?"

She came close. He laughed, put an arm around her, held her to his side, his warm, vital side. She

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thought she could hear his heart beat, or was it only the tramp of marching men?

"My uniform can go back to the closet and the camphor balls. Listen to that. Already more tramps than we need or can use."

He released her, strode across the room, slung the uniform over his arm and went with it into the bedroom. Pauli followed him. She'd gone white. Her eyes were amazing, the pupils dilated. She said his name, over and over, in little catches of her breath. She took the uniform from his hands, there in the bedroom. It dropped to the floor as she went into his arms, uncaring if the others saw, uncaring if they heard. "Carl, Carl . . . *darling!*"

They had heard. Behrend said:

"That reminds me of something. Carl, Carl. Oh, yes, Karlowitzer! I'll go home to supper!"

"But," began Arndt, hospitably; yet Behrend forestalled him with a raised, pontifical hand:

"Don't urge me," he implored. "There is no need in my waiting—now that Carl remains with us. Besides, I have some business papers at home which compel my attention. Carl!"

Carl came to the door, his arm still around Pauli. Behrend looked at them tolerantly, the tolerance of middle age for youth. He said, half laughing, half chiding:

"Pauli, my dear, remember the Spartan women!"

Pauli reached out a hand and closed the bedroom door. She answered Behrend, smiling:

"Ah, yes. But they were savages!"

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Behrend shook his head at her, beckoned Carl.

"I'll see you again, Pauli— I'll be running in frequently." He paused to smite Carl on the shoulder. He addressed him, deeply. "And you—my boy; my heroic son!"

His red face was redder with emotion. He blew his trumpet-shaped nose violently into a silk handkerchief. He nodded at Arndt and went to the door, stood there, his eyes on Arndt, his hand creeping toward his plethoric pocket. "Don't forget, Leopold—if you change your mind. Remember, I may need *your* help, later on——"

He had gone. The room seemed larger on his departure, stiller, brighter. Pauli cried out:

"I'm so happy! Carl—are you *sure?* And you, father?"

Arndt rose.

"I'll get a paper. In times like these it's ridiculous not to have the latest edition."

He looked at them, as they stood there, close, close. His eyelids drooped a moment over his fine, expressive eyes. Then he was gone, abruptly, from the room. Pauli sighed:

"Father's a pessimist! And he says that a pessimist is anyone who lives with an optimist, the dear goose. Carl, you *are* sure, aren't you?"

"Practically——"

"But who said that . . ."

"Everybody!" he interrupted her. "Heavens! I'm hungry, Pauli—racing around the streets all afternoon."

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But for once she was deaf to his immediate needs. She said, very close to tears:

"You don't know what a coward I've been—every time anyone knocks at the door—every time the telephone rings."

Carl kissed her. He said, tenderly:

"Little idiot. Did you think they sent an escort or telephone? The call comes by mail—in a long blue envelope."

He sat down, pulled her into his lap.

"Well, everything's all right now, anyway," she said. "Have you noticed the picture?"

Carl gazed obediently at the crowded walls.

"What picture?"

"The picture that isn't there. Father sold it. He's lost his chair at the University and he thinks that I don't know. Poor baby! But now they'll send for him to come back."

"Doubtless," Carl said, smiling; "poor old fellow; how distressed he must have been."

"They'll produce your play now," Pauli said, eagerly.

"No," Carl said, briefly. "You see, I've been keeping things back, too. Bergman's changed his managerial mind. He says it's a bad play."

"Just because it deals with the insanity of war," said Pauli scornfully, "Carl—don't mind, dear. It will be a good play again when we are sane once more."

He hesitated. Held her cheek to his. Said slowly, releasing her:

"Well—but I've changed my views, too, Pauli."

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She jumped up and confronted him. Her face was blazing with sudden color. She cried out:

"You—you! Just because a band is playing! You mustn't, Carl. You mustn't. More than ever now you must tell the people that the real enemy is Hate! She smiled, realizing how faithfully *she* had remembered, how accurately she was quoting his earlier defiances. "Don't I make that clear?"

"Yes—quite clear," answered Carl, unconvinced, his mind occupied with the unusual beauty that momentarily informed her.

"All this silly fury about nothing. Do you know that Mitzi was beginning to hate—Bruce?"

Carl frowned. Now he believed the war to be over, now that a band was not playing, so to speak, he began to be a little ashamed of all his previous outbursts; and he said, very sincerely:

"How idiotic!"

"Well; I'd begun to hate Mitzi," said Pauli, in a sort of weary bewilderment.

Carl shook his head. Pauli—and Mitzi. Bruce and Mitzi. Now that it came down to people he actually knew, how absurd it all seemed. And hadn't he shown it in his play? Bergman was wrong. It was a good play—for these very times. He, Carl, had been wrong. What had he been thinking of, to agree with Bergman? To agree with everyone? How and where had he lost himself? He felt battered and beaten by the swift-changing onslaughts of differing emotions.

Suddenly Carl's eyes were caught by a movement near the door. He stared. Through the long slot for

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mail, into the wire basket on the inside, something was falling, something long, blue. . . .

He rose.

"And Mitzi," continued Pauli, "was beginning to hate me. Now we don't have to hate anyone, do we?"

He did not answer.

"Do we?" she repeated childishly.

Carl stood straighter. His tone was changed, even harsh. He said:

"Well, if they——"

"What's wrong?" she asked quickly.

"Nothing."

"Sit down. Look at me." She dropped to his knees again. She said, very low:

"Dearest—I couldn't tell you when I thought you were going away, but soon after we moved into our new home . . . Carl! You're not listening!"

She rose hurt, bewildered. Carl got to his feet.

"What is it?" she asked him. She followed his glance and started toward the door. He put out a hand to stop her.

"It's nothing I tell you—a letter——"

Her eyes were fixed, staring. She whispered:

"A blue envelope——"

"Pauli—it's just a circular——"

Her face was aged by years. She kept her eyes on the thing in the wire basket. She could see it clearly now. She said, spacing her words, and as if she had seen something horrible, abnormal:

"There's—no—stamp!"

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CHAPTER TEN

THEY stood quite still, stone-still. Only their eyes lived, staring. . . .

Carl whispered:

"How can you see—from here? Many circulars bear no stamps. We mustn't allow ourselves to——"

"Get it!" she said, her voice as sharp as a twig snapping.

He did not move. Pauli cried out again:

"Get it! I can't endure this——"

He moved toward the door. A revulsion of feeling overcame her. She—couldn't . . . know. She held up one hand and begged, pitifully:

"No. Wait! *Wait!*"

She leaned back against the table for support. The envelope was already in his hands. Long, blue, without a stamp. She asked, her whisper as piercing as a scream:

"Well?"

Carl opened the envelope. After a moment.

"Yes," he said.

"But why—*why*—you said——"

He answered with an impersonal impatience:

"I said what everyone said. Everyone said, 'There's no one left to fight.' It must be a mistake."

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The bell rang. Carl pulled the door open and Fritz stumbled across the threshold. He was curiously altered—wild, distraught, and a little drunk.

"You see, Fritz."

"What is it?" asked Pauli.

Fritz threw up both arms. He said:

"England. England has declared war on Germany. that means—us. We're at war with England!"

Pauli was very still. Carl said, caught up once more in the cyclonic sweep of hatred:

"So that's it. *Damn* them."

In the little silence Pauli could hear through the open hall door the unknown violinist playing. What was he playing? Grieg, wasn't it? The thing from "Peer Gynt"? That funeral march, tramp, tramp, rain and tears, ancient rites, and ancient earth—tramp, tramp.

She cried out, flung her hands across her eyes.

"It was a blow in the dark," Fritz said. His eyes fell on the paper in Carl's hand, he pointed to it. "What's that?"

"Our Regiment. To-morrow. Didn't you have your notice?"

"I haven't been home," said Fritz. "There, I came to show you——"

He gave Carl the newspaper he had carried. The headlines screamed damply across the top. Carl read:

"England Declares War."

Baruska came in, with the table things. She set them down and stood still, listening.

Pauli turned to Fritz.

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"I don't understand. Carl said there wasn't a possibility of his going—or of you——"

"It's sudden," he told her. "See—there in the paper? They asked a reply by midnight, and—they didn't wait."

Carl read aloud, slowly, as if the words were strange to him:

"British Army Mobilizing."

Fritz laughed, an ugly sound.

"They were all ready!"

Carl continued, still in that childish, first-grade fashion.

"Sending troops to Belgium——"

"Let 'em!" screamed Fritz. "The more the merrier! We'll drive them into the sea!"

The paper fell to the floor. Carl cried out:

"Yes! My God—yes!"

Baruska, open-mouthed at the table, broke suddenly into song. She sang, beating time with a knife:

"No nation that opposes us."

"Pauli turned, cried out sharply, "Baruska!"

But Carl had lost his head. He moved toward the center of the room, dragging Fritz with him.

"Leave her alone. Let her sing. It's on their account that we—come, we'll sing the chorus with her. Baruska, sing! Sing, Pauli—sing, 'No nation that opposes us,' sang Carl, in his clear tenor.

Pauli stood, a little rock of silence, while the waves of music beat about her. She said, finally, imploringly, almost pityingly:

"Carl."

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"Sing!" commanded Carl. He and Fritz and Baruska stood there. They sang:

"God marches with our eagles——"

Mitzi ran in through the open hall door. She looked swiftly around the room, cried out over the singing:

"What is it? Fritz, you here? And you've been drinking!"

"We're at war—with England," her husband told her, and Carl stooped to pick up the paper. "Here," said Carl.

"The more the merrier," said Fritz again. He silenced Baruska's voice, which had continued, solo, and raised his own again:

"We're going to rush the Russians!"

Mitzi read aloud:

"Germans assaulted in London."

"We can do that, too," Fritzi told her.

She continued, holding the paper tightly.

"Austrian flag dragged in the mud——"

Fritz said, rapidly:

"One Englishman has been beaten, in the Franz-Joseph Strasse. There'll be others. The country is full of their spies. We'll clean them out, eh, Carl?"

"Every—damned—one!" said Carl.

Pauli paled. She said:

"Not—Bruce?"

Carl shrugged. His face was lit by an ugly inner flame. It flickered in his eyes. He said, roughly:

"But for Bruce and his countrymen we shouldn't be—*I* shouldn't be—going. Come on, Pauli, sing. Everybody sing!"

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They sang. All save Pauli. She stood quite still, listening, yet not hearing. The chorus rang out:

"God marches with our eagles,
God Victory will bring;
If the King of England fights us—then—
God—save—the—King!"

Pauli looked up. In the doorway stood—Bruce Gordon. He was white, whiter than she. He came into the room, and closed the door behind him. The singing stopped. There was a dead silence, a silence with body to it, with weight, oppressive, terrifying.

Bruce asked, quietly:

"Well, what's happened?"

He looked at Fritz. Fritz wet his dry lips, tried to speak, said, "You—" and stopped. The sound was animal, not human. A growl, a snarl.

"He's drunk," thought Bruce.

"Carl, what's happened?"

"You know!" said Carl, sneering.

"I do not. I've been reading, in the University. Pauli—" He took a step nearer her—"Pauli—tell me!"

Carl jumped between them. He said, menacing:

"Keep away from my wife!"

Pauli thrust out her hand imploringly. The slow tears gathered in her eyes, Bruce frowned. He said, amazed:

"I don't understand."

"You do," Fritz denied, coming closer and jutting his face near Bruce's. "Your countrymen dragged our flag in the mud!"

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"Where?" asked Bruce, quietly.

"In London." Fritz snatched the paper from Mitzi and thrust it at him. "Read that."

Bruce read. They stood there, watching him. They searched his face. It hardened perceptibly. Pauli cried out:

"Oh, let's be fair! Bruce isn't in London . . . and he doesn't have to go. What do you say, Bruce?"

What would he answer? She was thinking that Bruce had given her Carl, that he wouldn't take him away. He looked at her and his honest eyes were dull with astonishment. But more than astonishment struggled to their surface. He said harshly:

"What can *I* say?"

There was definite hostility in his tone. All at once she knew that he, too, had been caught up in this whirlwind of hate in which everything, even friendship, could be swept away; that all races react as one under the same terrible stimulus. She tried to keep her head, tried not to believe. She spoke to him urgently, despite Carl's hurting clutch laid suddenly on her arm:

"We are your friends."

Bruce answered, clarion clear:

"England is my country!"

Pauli put her hand to her throat, Bruce who had given her Carl. For Carl had told her the story of that far-away birthday night. She uttered her thoughts, without consideration:

"You gave me—my husband. You wouldn't——"

Fritz, dimly understanding, broke in. He said, nastily:

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"Oh—*wouldn't* he?"

"Not Carl! Not Carl!" Pauli cried.

"Carl or me or anybody," argued Fritz. "Friendship? What's that to this traitor, from a land of traitors?"

Bruce swung around on him, violently, suddenly. His eyes were no longer dull. They gleamed. He said:

"A land of what— What's that you say? England? England asleep while Germany and you plotted world dominion. England, trading quietly, while jealous rivals schemed to crush her. For fifty years you've been preparing; and then, because a crazy schoolboy made an end to a fat bully——"

Mitzi gasped. She said, wildly:

"Our beloved Archduke! Will no one stop him?"

"You invade a peaceful nation," Bruce went on, "at our very doors!"

"So your security was involved," Fritz sneered.

"Security. No. Our honor!" the Englishman told him. "Don't talk of friendship. You have no friends." He balled the newspaper in his long clever fingers, flung it to the floor. "When you entered Belgium you became the enemy of the world!"

Fritz started forward. His lips were drawn back from his even teeth. He said, threateningly:

"You——"

"Wait! Wait!" Pauli implored. "Don't you see, can't you see, he's saying the same thing we're saying? We're all saying the same thing and believing it and killing one another for it." She lifted her strained

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face, her hands clasped together, and cried out, in a voice of exceeding despair, "God in Heaven, what's it all about?"

Fritz muttered, sullenly:

"They dragged our flag in the mud!"

Mitzi pointed. Her hand shook. She said, shrilly:

"Yes! And we're flying theirs——"

Their eyes followed her. To Bruce's picture, the little English flag draped over the frame. Carl started forward. He said, bitterly:

"The dirty rag!"

"Don't touch that flag!" ordered Bruce, sharply.

Carl stood still. He asked:

"What'll *you* do?"

Pauli thought of her question, "You gave me my husband Bruce—you wouldn't take him away?" She looked at Gordon. Her question was answered. Bruce said, savagely, stark murder in his tone:

"Never mind. Don't touch it, I tell you!"

Fritz leaped. He screamed. His voice soared out over the still room:

"I spit on it!" cried Fritz.

Bruce's arm thrashed out. Fritz staggered back against the table. His hand touched the carving knife that lay there, and closed on it. He recovered his balance, he made a sweeping rush at Bruce, the knife in his hand.

"Spy! English spy!"

Bruce came to grips with him, twisted his wrist. But not in time; as Fritz staggered back the others

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saw Bruce's hand, bleeding, his cuff stained red. . . . There was a sick, sobering silence.

"Fritz!" said Pauli hopelessly.

Carl had gone white, gray-green about the mouth. He groped for the table, clung to it, sick all over——

"Bruce, your arm! Look! Oh, my God——"

Bruce heeded no one. He went to the picture. He took the little flag in his hand, reverently, devotionally. He put it in his pocket. From the table he picked up a napkin to wrap around his cut. Baruska, who had been standing motionless, almost idiotic with excitement, ran to open the bedroom door, to get a towel. Her instincts were housewifely. She flung the door back. The sound of marching feet followed the action.

Pauli said:

"Someone—get a doctor."

"It's nothing," said Bruce, "I can take care of it."

Pauli flamed. The others had sobered. But as, momentarily, their hatred died with the realization of the significance of blood, hers awoke. Bruce was Carl's enemy. She hated him. She spoke to him in a voice as hard as stone, cutting as glass:

"Then *go*. Go *now*, please."

He turned away. The hall door was flung wide, and Jan came in.

"Mr. Carl. Marching orders. Barracks to-morrow!" said Jan.

"To-morrow?" whispered Mitzi. *"To-morrow?"*

"At daylight."

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Pauli asked:

"When?"

"Six o'clock."

Mitzi was quiet suddenly. That volatile little thing. Quite quiet. She turned to Fritz who stood shaking, stammering a little, incoherently. She said:

"Come, Fritz. Quickly."

As husband and wife left the room others heard Mitzi say, simply:

"We must go to Kurt, you know."

Bruce stood where he had halted at Jan's appearance. He was dazed. Not from the wound which another had inflicted, not at the sight of his own blood which another had spilled, but at the knowledge that he, too, had been snatched up by the wings of the whirlwind, that he would have killed Fritz—or Carl—and that he was forever estranged from Pauli.

Jan spoke to him, gently, without emotion:

"You've hurt your hand. Come, let me fix it, a little cold water. . . ."

Docilely, Bruce followed Jan. Baruska had gone, too. A long silence reigned in the room they had left. Very long. It had grown dark and the supper lay on the table, untasted. Pauli stood at the window. She said, in the very corpse of a voice:

"Daylight——"

There was blood on the tablecloth. From Bruce's hand. Carl's eyes had never left it. He slumped into a chair and took his head between his hands. He said, despairingly, imploringly:

"Oh—my—God!"

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CHAPTER XI

"PAULI?"

"Carl . . ."

"I have to leave you—darling . . . darling——"

"Don't think about it now, lie closer. Feel my arms about you, Carl? See, how tightly I hold you; nothing can really take you away——"

All through the night they held one another, in that pitiful embrace. The merciful darkness was about them, they could not see each other's eyes, each other's beloved features. But they could hear, above the monotony of the feet that tramped beyond the windows, the beating of each other's heart.

The hours slipped by, into nothingness, into Eternity. They knew that terrible sense of futility; they learned that bitter lesson of the true lover, that flesh is it's own barrier; that never, never, could they come as close to one another as yearning bade them—strain and clasp and kiss—and always the knowledge that they were separate entities, two bewildered and agonized souls.

When they spoke it was brokenly, and in whispers. Sometimes quite irrelevantly, as when Pauli said, in a curious and childlike tone:

"That unknown violinist. I haven't heard him play—for several days. Where is he? Why don't we know?"

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Carl answered her:

"Perhaps he's gone."

"Gone?"

"To war——"

She pondered this a moment. She whispered, piteously:

"War? Oh—his poor hands. . . ."

There was a silence between them. Pauli had great things in her heart to say to her husband, her lover. Messages of courage, of truth, of loyalty. But she could not utter them. They fluttered at her breast like the wings of caged birds and she could not release them into speech. And always she had the knowledge that the one thing she longed to tell him must remain untold. How could she tell him, now?

The tramping of feet continued. All night long. Right, left, right, left . . . all the hours through. They seemed to weave a rhythm that was more significant than the mere rhythm of the march. They formed a Greek Chorus to Pauli's thoughts; they were the footsteps of Nemesis, the padding tread of Fate. They marched through her brain, heavy, heavy . . . unceasing.

It seemed to her that if they did not stop she would go mad. She took Carl's hands in hers and covered her ears with them; she lay with her head on his breast, her pale, scented hair scattered over his throat, across his face.

"Pauli?"

"Carl . . ."

"I must leave you——"

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Over and over, at intervals, the same sentence. She thought, "I must remember every word. I must take every touch, every kiss deep, deep into my memory. I must be able to live every minute over again"—yet she knew that she would not be able to; that she would look back on that night, dark, secret, intense . . . and that it would be a blur to her, a tangle of passion and terror, seen through the distortion of tears.

The night passed. Toward morning they fell into a troubled sleep, they who had sworn not to sleep. Pauli awoke first. She thought, "What is it? What is threatening me? What have I to dread?" Then in her half-conscious condition, between waking and sleeping, she heard the sound of marching feet. She had slept, but they were unsleeping.

She roused Carl. She leaned over him, pitying and tender. She thought, "I'm glad I woke before he did, glad he needn't wake alone to—this." Then her heart said clearly, "He'll wake, alone, for many nights, alone and distant."

She closed her eyes. Then she kissed him. She called, quite clearly and steadily:

"It's time, dearest."

Carl woke, turning over on his side. He said, with the drowsy boyish crossness that she loved in him:

"Nonsense, it's early. Why did you? *Pauli!*"

She saw his face change from the innocence of sleep to the knowledge of waking. She saw his eyes. She put out her hand and hid his face against her breast. She touched his hair with her light, caressing hand.

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She said, "Hush, hush," as one says it to a child. She held him, close, while the tramping feet went by and he remembered.

Presently, he said:

"All right——"

He dressed. They moved about the room in silence. Pauli, a heavy bathrobe over her nightgown, her hair in a long braid, curling at the ends, slipped out into the kitchen, brought him hot coffee and rolls, stood over him while he made a choked pretense of eating. It was beginning to get light. The wan gray beyond the windows was paling, brightening.

Presently Carl pushed the cup away from him as he sat at the center table in the living room. Pauli stood at the window. Carl's eyes were on the fatigue cap which lay before him. The shoulders in the uniform drooped. Pauli turned from the window. She said, very simply, a herald of disaster, a herald of unpitying dawn:

"Daylight——"

"Oh—my God——"

Pauli asked, not turning:

"What time is it?"

Carl got up. He moved as an old man moves. He went over to the single lamp, glanced at his wrist watch, and said:

"Just five——"

The tramping feet went on—Pauli cried out in a sudden hysteria:

"And shut those doors— I—I——"

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Carl closed the doors between the bedroom and the living room. He said:

"I'm sorry. I know. I forgot when I went in for my—" he looked toward the cap on the table. He added, "We have fifteen minutes."

She came toward him, her hands lay at her sides. She commented, in a voice of dull amazement:

"Fifteen minutes? But a moment ago it was an hour. Time goes so—quickly."

"This last night together—" Carl reminded her.

"No, no; it isn't the last night. Don't say that. What a horrible word, *last*. It's only for a little while, Carl. Carl, do you remember——"

He took her in his arms. He remembered. Their wedding night. He kissed her forehead, her lips. He said:

"I remember. It was kind of your father to leave us alone this morning. Last night was hard, saying good-by to him."

Pauli nodded. She raised her head, looked through the window across the court. She sighed:

"Mitzi's light is still burning. All night, I suppose. Poor little Mitzi!"

Carl was silent for a minute. Then he said:

"Yes. Poor Bruce! I wonder if I'll ever see him again. Pauli, Pauli—if we should meet—out there?"

"Don't!" she cried sharply.

He felt her, limp, in his arms. He put her in a chair by the window. Stood beside her. He began to speak, slowly, with an obvious effort:

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"Pauli, I want to tell you something."

In the pale dawnlight she saw his face, quivering —his eyes, as if they had looked on horror. She implored again, putting out one hand as if to ward off something hideous:

"No, no. Don't!"

"But I must," he told her, with something of sternness. "Can't you see that I must? That you must have all of me, know all of me? That I must share it with you. . . . Pauli—when—when Bruce was hurt, there, it made me ill, I tell you. Ill. Blood always does. When I was a boy, I——"

His voice died away. He clenched and unclenched his hands. She stared into his eyes. She knew what he was seeing, back of those eyes: blood, men, mangled men, and blood. She said, very quickly:

"I understand. But you're a man now, Carl."

"Am I?"

His question came to her, clearly. The hopeless drop of the voice. She looked at him, sharply. She listened, and heard him say:

"I—oh, you must know it, Pauli—I'm not a soldier. This—isn't my work!"

Pauli reached up, held his hand to her cheek in one of those immemorial gestures of wives and mothers. No, it was not his job. He wasn't afraid of anything that was his work, as he'd said long ago. His fear now was not for himself and he was of too fine material to become a willing murderer. His courage was as clear as sunlight, but it was moral and not physical courage. Not the courage of men called "fearless."

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Pauli knew her man. Knew how brave he was, brave enough to persevere in his work despite mockery and failure, brave enough to be willing to give her up when he believed it was for her good. She thought, "I wonder how many women are helping their men over just such a bad hour? Here, and in France, Germany, in England, in little Serbia, in Belgium and Russia?"

She said, soothingly, as to a child:

"Hush—try not to think——"

The living flame in his soul leaped up, made its unanswerable demand.

"What will become of my work?" asked Carl Behrend.

She kissed the hand. The hand that had written all those fine stirring things. The dear hand. She answered:

"When you come back——"

But he was no longer listening. His heart was questioning now, the fire at his heart's core, the heart that loved her. His voice sharpened. He asked:

"What will become of—*you?*"

She smiled now. Answered, clearly:

"I shall be waiting——"

After a moment he questioned, stumbling over the simple and terrible words:

"And if I don't . . . come back?"

"I shall be waiting," said Pauli.

A little pause fell upon them. She asked:

"What time is it?"

"Ten after——"

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"No, it can't be! Is your watch right? Are you sure? Ah, Carl! I'm cold. . . ."

He sat down on the arm of her chair and put his arm about her. Pauli looked out of the window.

"There's another light now," she told him. "Lights everywhere. Women everywhere. Other women's men—going . . . Carl, your hands are cold!"

"Yes."

She took them, held them to her warm breast, close to the satin skin. She murmured, as a mother to a child:

"There, there. Let me warm them."

"You can't," he told her, abruptly. "It's because—*I'm afraid.*"

Pauli felt her nerves snapping under the strain. She thought, "Must it be said between us? How can I meet it—for him?" She felt her voice harsh in her throat as she answered:

"No, don't say that."

He slipped from the arm of his chair, knelt down before her, his arms spread out across her knees. He looked up young, pale as ashes, only the eyes living. His lips shook. He tried to steady them, his trying was pitiful to her.

"Pauli, I can't help it. I'm afraid, afraid, I tell you. Father was right. I'm afraid of everything, of shadows, of myself, of—war. God, what a coward I am!"

She took his dear head between her palms. She looked down, directly into his eyes. She told him, urgently:

"No!"

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"Yes . . . I'm—afraid of being afraid——"

Her eyes held him. She said, profoundly:

"No, Carl, you are not!"

"You don't know. How can you? Listen. When I was doing my service, sacks, stuffed, and we—with our bayonets, pressed. You could feel them, going in, piercing. I *had* to. I— And now . . . men—not sacks any longer. Men, Pauli; men like myself. Other women's men. I can't, I tell you, I *can't!*"

She understood. She longed to say it: "I understand, I understand." But she set her lips and her words, two little words only, were hard as iron, sharp as arrows:

"You *must.*"

"I can't. I'm afraid. I can't kill people—I can't hate anyone, not really. I've tried! Bruce, all blood! I shall see thousands like that; worse; bloody arms and heads. Horses ripped open! Men stabbed and torn and blown to bits. Kill or be killed! I can't. I won't. I—I'll run away——"

She held him closer. Her voice was soft now unyielding, immeasurably sad:

"No, Carl——"

"Yes. Yes. It would be better now than——"

"No. You won't run. Not now. Nor at any time. Never. You'll be—brave."

Her eyes still held him. He, with his artist's sensitivity, his imagination, had been seeing—unspeakable things; anticipating, loathing. And she had seen, too, them through his eyes, in his eyes.

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Carl got to his feet. He trembled all over. He repeated, with self-contempt:

"Brave!"

She got to her feet, put her hand on his arm. Her eyes called to him, "Steady, steady." Her voice commanded:

"Yes. For me . . . to come back to me, Carl!"

For an instant it seemed as if he must thrust her away—must shut out from his sight her shining eyes, her *believing* eyes. Must run; run, hide, as an animal hides in a blind, instinctive panic. All the foundations of his life were breaking up around him, beneath him. He tried once more to reach her, to appeal:

"I can't. You don't understand. What's the use of lying to you? I'm a coward! I can't go! I'm afraid. I'm *horribly—horribly*—afraid!"

He flung up his hands, the back of them to his eyes. Her grasp of his arm was shaken loose. But she stood there. Believing. Knowing him so much better than he knew himself. Her heart cried out to him, "No, no—of such stuff the real heroes are made. You'll win through. *I* know you!"

But she said it—differently. She said:

"I love you——"

He straightened. Stared at her. A footstep sounded dimly, then loudly. Jan came in from the hall. The light was in back of him, shone on his altered face, a set face, the boyishness wiped out; shone, too, on his uniform.

Jan saluted; spoke crisply:

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"Lieutenant!"

Carl's hand went up, mechanically. He asked:

"Yes?"

"Time!" said Jan.

Carl's heels clicked together. His face froze into the official mould. He ordered, briefly,

"Go ahead."

Jan went through the door. There were voices, outside in the common corridors. Mitzi's voice. Fritz Winckleman's. Carl picked up his cap and crossed over to Pauli. He put out his arms, took her to his heart. He said, almost casually, so great was his restraint:

"Good-by, Pauli——"

"Good-by," she answered.

Holding her there he added:

"And, don't worry—about me."

She understood. He'd win through. She'd always known it. The night had passed. The dark night. Of anticipation. The morning had come. Of realization. Of facing things. Of biting on the bullet. In a way, for Carl, the worst was over now. There was no turning back He'd go—ahead.

"No," she told him, "I'll not worry."

As he let her go and turned to the door she caught back a scream. Oh, to have him go—like that—not knowing! Not knowing! She called his name, urgently. He turned back, looked at her.

"It's nothing," she said, strong again. "I don't want you to worry about me, either."

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The voices in the hall grew more confusing. Fritzi was calling for Carl, and his wife's clear, shaken voice spoke his name over and over—Fritz, Fritz!

"Carl," Fritz called. "Ready?"

Carl's answer reached the outsiders.

"Ready!" he said. "Ready!"

He was gone. Pauli stood there a minute, listening to his voice speaking to Mitzi, to Mitzi's sobs. She sat down in the chair by the window. Her eyes were dry. She thought, dully, "If only I could cry, perhaps it would be better—perhaps."

Mitzi came in. Her pretty little features were swollen with crying, almost past recognition. She went over to Pauli.

"They're gone," she said, in a voice of dim astonishment. "Almost without warning." She paused and added:

"We may never see them again, never. Pauli—poor Pauli! I—*I* have a child——"

Pauli's lax hand closed—opened again . . . her mouth twitched. She thought, "Should I have told him? Was it his right to know? Maybe he will never know now."

"You've got to face everything alone," Mitzi told her. "Ah, poor Pauli!"

Pauli looked straight ahead of her. Her face was quiet now. Her eyes were brilliant. She was inscrutable, the symbol of womanhood. Her body bore Carl's child. Her blood fed it. She was silent, wondering.

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Mitzi looked at her and thought, abruptly, "Kurt? If anything happens to——"

She cried out:

"Pauli! Poor little Kurt! To grow up, without a father . . . I never realized. Oh, Pauli——"

She fell on her knees beside the chair and laid her head in the other woman's lap. Pauli's hand went up. She stroked the thick hair mechanically. She did not speak. She scarcely knew that Mitzi knelt there. She thought:

"Yes. To grow up without a father, Carl's child."

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CHAPTER TWELVE

CARL had gone. Yet the motions of life went on for Pauli in the flat in the Hahngasse. Incredible, that she still lived, ate, breathed, slept. Incredible that she could talk and smile and even laugh a little at the efforts of her father and Baruska to cheer her, to bring to her attention the little comic happenings of everyday, the unstalled repetitions of those familiar, small jests that appertain to a family, to every family.

The day following Carl's departure she saw Bruce Gordon for an hour. He had come to collect his belongings, to take his leave. He saw Professor Arndt alone, in his study. What passed between the two friends, no one knew. He saw Pauli, alone, in the living room, every object of which was known to him.

They did not speak of the last time they had seen each other, although Bruce's hand and wrist, not yet healed, testified mutely to those moments of stark and brutal hatred. They spoke of Carl, quietly, wistfully. Once Bruce said, "If only I might have seen him again!"

She asked him:

"You'll get home all right?"

"Yes, we're all leaving, batches of us, all the foreigners, except the Americans. Later, it won't be so easy. We go within two hours. I've got rather a pull,

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you know," he told her, smiling, "even in wartime, it works."

On a breath, very low, she asked:

"You'll fight?"

He nodded, his blonde face set in unusual lines.

"Yes. I must, you see."

She tried to tell herself, as she had once told herself, "this man is an *enemy*. This man will wear a British uniform and go out into the field of battle to kill my people—to kill—Carl. "But she could not formulate the words in her mind. It couldn't be. This man, Englishman, enemy, was her friend. She knew that he was more than her friend. She knew that, in his heart, he was her lover. That he had cared for her ever since he had first come to the Arndts' and been accepted as one of their own. Impossible that a dead Archduke, a conference of statesman, a band playing in the street should change that man into a stranger, a foeman.

Presently, she gave him her hands and wished him Godspeed. She said, serenely:

"When it is all over, Bruce—you'll come back to us."

"I'll come back," he promised her.

The tears she had not been able to shed for Carl blinded her vision as she saw Gordon walk from the room; fell in her heart as she asked of it, "Shall I ever see him again?" The tears of sorrow, of emotion, of parting. But her sorrow for Carl, her parting with him, had gone too deep for tears.

The days went by, the marching weeks and months. Vienna was a city of flags, a city of music, of madness.

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Once Pauli and her father went out to the First Coffee House with a German friend of Arndt's and heard him tell how the first Russian prisoners passed through Dresden on August twenty-seventh. Men in middle life, bearded men, beardless boys. He told how the women spat toward them as they passed.

Arndt listened in silence, watching the square, kindly face of his friend turn florid, the hot blood rushing to the lined cheeks, the blue eyes burning. Pauli hardly heard. She played with her coffee and her cake, and thought, "prisoners . . . beaten, bewildered, but in a measure safe." She thought further, "Aren't we all prisoners, of something . . . of our love or our greed or our terror?" Then abruptly, she wondered how she would feel if she heard that Carl had been taken prisoner? She began to pray, in a scattered, incoherent, silent fashion, that these unknown Russians might be well treated, might even be a little comforted; so that, if Carl were to be taken, he would be cared for —and safe.

The streets became terrible to her. As the autumn passed and winter drew in, she walked on the streets as if on swords. So many people, all with those harried faces! Women already in black, women mourning; the long lines of women standing before the post-office windows sending off their boxes to the front, the women working in the Red Cross rooms; the women—reading the casualty lists, reading with strained eyes and tense faces, their lips bitten, their hands shaking, an awful hunger for certainty on them.

Christmas. They had a little tree, and Mitzi and

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Kurt came in, and Behrend. But it wasn't much of a success, except for Kurt. And presents were scarce, that year. All they could spare had gone into Christmas boxes for Carl, for other soldiers. But they followed the old Polish custom which Dr. Arndt loved and had carp for dinner and poppy-seed pudding and a little wine in which to drink a toast to "The Absent."

They sang carols, too, around the tree, even Behrend. A wax angel floated downward from the top beneath a tinsel star. All that night, after she had gone to bed, Pauli seemed to see the angel—under the silver star—with spread wings and a rosy, childish face, looking down at them, the little symbol of Peace.

Winter closed in. Still in the streets the soldiers tramped by, with flags flying and with the women running along the curb, shouting, laughing, crying, cheering. Once Pauli, coming home from the Red Cross, saw Baruska, following a company, her broad face covered with sweat, despite the cold day, her eyes inhuman, her mouth stretched to comic proportions, not quite a woman.

It seemed to Pauli that of that first year she remembered the oddest things, looking back. She remembered being in the streets when the damp extras with their news of the battle of Jutland were flung from hand to hand. With her was a Canadian girl, a girl who was studying music in Vienna. A small curly-headed, laughing girl who had professed that she'd rather stay and report to the police than go—that she had given up everything for her career—why should she be driven away? Her name was Meg Ainslee, and

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Pauli always remembered how the child snatched the printed paper from her hands and read the few, evasive lines, with the sudden tears streaming down her face in the dark streets, under one single light—she remembered the tears and the snow drifting down and the urgency with which she quieted the girl, lest Meg be noticed by the crowding people, and perhaps, harmed.

A day or two later, with some other women who had not gone home immediately, the little pianist sailed for home. Pauli never saw her again. She never forgot her, although she had not known her very well.

Pauli lived for the letters. The letters from Carl. They said very little about himself, save that he was "all right." He couldn't write much, she understood that; not with the censorship; and not with those miles between them, miles not only of distance but of circumstance, of experience. His letters were mostly, "Do you remember?" He recalled a thousand little, trivial things to her mind that she thought he had forgotten, some which she had forgotten. He wanted to know "how things looked," how this friend was, how that; if she were comfortable, if she were fretting, what the professor was doing, how was Baruska . . . didn't he wish he had some of that birthday goose now! And could she manage to knit him some more socks? His were about gone.

Curious little letters. Letters that dwelt, lovingly, longingly, on the dear trivialities of life; letters that spoke, so inarticulately for Carl, of his love for her, of his yearning to see her; scrawled letters on torn paper; letters that said nothing, yet everything.

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She lived for them. And she lived in terror lest one of her own letters should come back to her with that blue-penciled scrawl, *missing,* upon it. She knew other women well, who had seen just such a devastating return of the letters they had sent out, hopefully.

Now and then she had a happy hour of which she might tell him. She sought for such hours eagerly; she was a miser with them, not for herself, but because she might be able to write Carl something that would comfort him, something that would ease his mind about her. Once she and her father went to hear Johann Straus play the old waltzes. Carl had loved those, their singing langor, their almost melancholy, their sweetly sad cadences. She told him how Straus had led, slim and tall, his violin under his chin, dancing to his own music about the platform. How people had sung and applauded. She did not tell him of the end of the program, the National Anthem, and the people standing on chairs and tables to sing and to cheer. She thought, "he has had enough of national anthems." So she sat down with her pen and paper and tried to recapture for him the old, enchanting melodies, the waltzes.

She was often with Mitzi. Mitzi was changing. She had lost much of her vitality, her feet moved slowly, they no longer ran to hidden music. Sometimes it seemed to Pauli that Mitzi could not bear the presence of Kurt. Kurt was very like his father, somehow; and there were hours when Mitzi would look at the child unseeingly, yet seeing far too much—and

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push him away from her almost fiercely when he came to her knee with some childish question or plea—push him away, and then catch him back again, kiss him with a savagery that terrified him, wet his fair hair with tears.

Pauli was beginning to understand. Her own child moved beneath her heart with the fluttering of distant wings. Pauli, too, walked more slowly now, but proudly, as women do who bear a treasure.

She wrote to Carl—and tore it up. Her father asked her, quietly:

"You've told Carl about the child?"

"No, dear, not yet."

"It is his right to know."

"Oh, not until it's all over, father, please. Can't you understand? He'd worry so—off there, alone, without me, wondering if—if anything were going to happen to me?"

Arndt nodded.

"Yes. I understand."

It was spring when the baby was born, a boy. A small, delicate, blonde baby, who opened great eyes in question. He had, she thought, hiding her foolish fancy, something of that wax-angel look about him, evanescent . . . a glance that was benediction, a beauty not quite earthly.

The pain, she hadn't minded that much. But the loneliness was bad. The wanting Carl, Carl's hand, Carl's eyes upon her, Carl's voice in her ears, during the bad time. Once she faltered and told herself, "I must die of this"; and then, resolutely, "I must live—

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for this," and knew that no other arms but hers should put the child into the arms of his father.

Dr. Arndt wrote. And Pauli wrote, lying there, paler than lilies, the pencil wavering in her hand. She wrote:

"Little Carl is just like you, dearest . . . he *is* you."

She was inept with him at first. Baruska undertook her instruction, with Mitzi's help, and with many shouts of laughter and admonitions.

"Not that way! Heavens above! Is that the way to bathe a baby? He can't swim yet, Miss Pauli. See, hold your hand under his little head, so, and so. There, my brave manling, kick your little feet and cry. So grows the baby into a man!"

Arndt was tender with him, almost afraid of his own emotion. This little child was of his blood, the child of his child's body. This little boy was his grandson.

The baby had another grandfather, Behrend. But Behrend had not seen his son's son. Shortly before the birth of the baby Behrend and Arndt had quarreled bitterly and, it would seem, finally. Over a carload of rice. Just that. Behrend's carload. Which he was hoarding, to sell at extortionate prices. And Behrend hadn't been to the flat or the Hahngasse since.

Pauli's milk failed her. She was not getting nourishing food. One by one the professor was selling his pictures. But food was dear; and it was worse than dear, it was scarce, the sort of food that Pauli should have. She had not really cried since Carl left, but she cried bitterly the day she weaned him, the day that she and Baruska and Mitzi with all their combined

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efforts could not force him to take the despised bottle. He fought . . . "like a soldier," Baruska said pridefully.

But Baruska's day was drawing to a close. She had stayed on and on despite the professor's warning that soon they could not afford to accept her services in lieu of interest on the mortgage. But now she was going. They could not afford to feed her. Weeping facile tears at parting from Pauli and the baby, but weeping more at the thought of leaving Vienna—all the crowds and the flags and the music and the "beautiful soldiers going by."

She went at last, her final, longing look riveted on the headless statue of the "Winged Victory." Went, back to the farm, to be "buried alive," as she said tragically, trying to plan in the instant of leaving, somewhere back in her peasant skull, some way of escape, some return.

When Baruska left, Pauli added her duties to her own. It seemed to those who loved her that she grew very pale, that she grew thin. Now and then her face would flush rosy red. When a letter from Carl came—oh, that dear first letter, after weeks of waiting, in which he called her, not wife nor lover, but mother of his son! He reproached her tenderly for keeping it from him; and yet added, "But you were right. I couldn't have stood it, Pauli—the waiting, the suspense."

She thought, "No. He couldn't have stood it; wondering, fearing, imagining." She did not ask herself how *she* stood it, the "waiting, the suspense."

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The thing that couldn't bear thinking of was that Carl and Bruce might meet. Carl had feared it, she knew. She knew, too, that Bruce had thought of it. Oh, but it was impossible! Out of so many thousands, so many thousands. Such an encounter could not take place. Yet it haunted her.

She was only Bruce's friend, as Carl was his friend. She wondered how the Englishwoman felt, how she lived. The Englishwoman around the corner, married to an Austrian, with three sons and a husband in the army. With brothers and nephews wearing British uniforms, in another army, the opposing army. Pauli used to see her light burn, late at night, and wonder and tremble.

Once, when she and Mitzi came home with the baby in the bright autumn sunlight, Pauli pointed upward at the Englishwoman's window and asked:

"How can she endure living?"

Mitzi understood. Her face thinner, drawn, older than a year ago, she answered, bitterly:

"She has to, I suppose. After all, she married here. Doesn't the Bible say something about forsaking your own people?"

Pauli stood still in the middle of the street. The baby laughed up at her as he lay in the old perambulator that that been Kurt's and which Dr. Arndt had painted bravely. She looked down into his innocent wise eyes. She looked up again at the blank window behind which must be so much suffering. She asked, very low:

"Mitzi—who are our own people?"

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Mitzi shrugged her thin shoulders. Once, she would have answered, hotly, eagerly. Now she said nothing. The two women went on again, the baby making dear, drowsy sounds as his mother wheeled him.

The Englishwoman's people, who were they? The husband she had married, the sons she had borne; or the father and the mother from whose love she had been created?

Pauli thought, appalled, "To be asked to *choose*. It isn't possible. It isn't human. Why aren't all the people in the world our own people? It would simplify things," she thought stupidly.

That afternoon when they were back at the flat and Pauli was making coffee—coffee was dear now, but there was a little in the house to-day and Mitzi must be tired—from across the court there came curious, tortured sounds. Pauli listened.

"What's that?"

Mitzi said, in a moment of astonishment:

"A violin. But, no; it can't be."

The professor came in from his afternoon at the Continental Coffee House. He shook his head at Pauli's gesture toward the pot, and sat down. Presently he remarked, alertly:

"Someone trying to play a fiddle. Lord, that's awful!"

The three listened in silence for a time. It didn't sound like a beginner somehow. It sounded like someone who had once known how to play. The instrument screamed, in an almost mortal agony. The wrong notes were scraped and clawed out of its very

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heart. There would be a pause, and the turmoil would start all over again, giving a voice to horror, discordant, terrible but patient. That was what struck Pauli. The patience. She set her teeth, listening.

Suddenly she pushed away her cup. The tears ran down her cheeks, but her eyes were wide. Her father and Mitzi looked at her in consternation. She said, the tears wetting her mouth:

"Don't you see? Can't you understand? That's the Unknown Violinist—come home. He's trying to play. I think he's lost his mind—out there."

After a minute the professor said slowly:

"I do see. I saw him. On the stairs. I didn't know who he was, of course. Quite a pale young man. There are two fingers missing from his right hand."

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

As time went by the unknown violinist became, to Pauli, a symbol rather than a man. She thought of him as if he were the essence of all humanity wounded by war, wounded spiritually. With infinite and tragic patience he was drawing discord from an instrument that had once been a tool of beauty, a thing of joy, creative and of unlimited potentiality. This instrument Pauli thought of as life itself—as everyday living. And under the discord she sensed, very faintly, the loveliness of harmony, pale as a ghost but not entirely defeated.

Financial and living conditions grew worse and worse. Gradually, from day to day, a shortage of food, a shortage of fuel, a shortage of money; very slowly, very inevitably, until the people of Vienna were living meanly and hopelessly almost without knowing when it had all come about. Yesterday, there had been a little good bread to buy; to-day, there was none.

There are many days in a year. Think of the hours! Every hour filled with fear for Pauli, fear that she tried to combat, to crush. She told herself continually, "I mustn't be so afraid for Carl. It's not good for him. My fear will haunt him like black shadows. I must keep on sending him thoughts of courage and hope and trust in his ultimate safety."

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So her letters to him were cheerful letters, filled with trivial happenings: how the baby laughed out, how he was beginning to say little words now, how she had taught him to put out his hands and say "Daddy" when Carl's picture was shown him. Of how good Mitzi had been, giving Pauli the baby clothes that had belonged to Kurt so that, even in austere wartime, little Carl Behrend, Jr., was comfortably dressed.

And Carl's letters came back to her, sometimes very irregularly, sometimes like clockwork. Days would go by and there would be no travel-stained, stampless envelope and Pauli would go around the flat like a little, seeking ghost, her eyes staring at the blank, faded red walls from which most of the pictures had departed. Then three or four letters would come at once and Pauli would sing at her work.

She had a good deal of work to do. She had the scant meals to prepare, the baby to care for, her father to look after. Arndt was aging. Less than the privations, his idleness was telling on him. He missed, more than he ever said, more, perhaps, than he knew, his work at the University; missed the faces of the students, the atmosphere of the classroom. But until he stopped going to the Coffee House he was not entirely unhappy. The little hour during which he sat in a warm, smoke-blue room, drinking a glass of coffee, rattling the papers, listening to the rise and fall of men's voices all about him, had always been a deep, homely pleasure to him. The Continental Coffee House was like a club to the men who frequented it year after year, day after day. But a time came when the professor

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could no longer afford that club. He resigned from it, therefore, without any outward formalities. He simply ceased to go. But he'd forget often. It used to break Pauli's heart to watch him, as the usual time came to start for the Coffee House, struggle into his shabby overcoat and take up his hat; and then, with a start and a sigh, take off his coat again, lay aside his hat and sit down in a chair, his hands clasped between his knees, his old shoulders bowed. Did he remember then that of late he had not been popular in the coffee houses? that men avoided him there?

Pauli seemed always to be breaking her heart. Over her father, over the baby, over Mitzi. The baby wasn't well. He wasn't definitely sick, he had no diseases, he simply did not thrive. He was a flower lacking nourishment, air, sun, warmth. He was a good baby, not fretful. When the little ailments of infancy seized him and Pauli's nights were sleepless, it hurt her cruelly to hear him cry, not in the lusty, petulant way of most babies, but with a sort of patient wailing, a protest against life as he found it.

And Mitzi. Mitzi was growing hard, bitter. As time went on Pauli heard very little of flags and glory and patriotism from her. She heard more of complaint and rebellion and terror.

Dr. Arndt, on "resigning" from his Coffee House took his coffee and his pipe at home for a time. But after a while there was no coffee and no tobacco. After a while he found himself making pilgrimages to the Prater, there to cut wood for the old-fashioned tile stove. Wood, the only fuel left to them now. He

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would bring it home in a basket, the few poor sticks, his heart sick over the destruction of the noble trees. But people must be warm; they can exist on very little food if only they are warm. Now and then in the bitter wintertime the baby would lie in his mother's bed and cry with the cold of little, red, frost-bitten hands. . . .

Slowly, painfully, leadenly the months swung by. After the winter, a brief, mockingly glorious spring, and then a hot, sticky summer, in which one forgot that there had ever been cold, in which Pauli watched the waxen face of her boy and wondered dully if there were really mountain places where cool winds sang through thick green foliage, if there were really stretches of beach and blue water and salt air to which a mother might take her small son and see the color come back to his cheeks, the light to his innocent eyes.

Then it was fall again, and once more a chilly, reluctant spring. The spring of 1917. Carl had been gone—more than three years.

But Carl was coming home. On his first leave. His last letter had said so; it had even named a possible date. Pauli walked through the flat with wings on her shabby shoes. She was hot, she was cold, she was tremulous as a girl, she was afraid. Three years, what had they done to him? How would he look? What would he say? That he loved her, she knew. But—three years!

She had changed. Her mirror told her how much. Her blond hair graying, her small, giving hands rough-

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ened, reddened, her slight figure emaciated. After Carl's letter came she stood for long minutes by her mirror, every day, wondering, wishing; wishing it all back again, the youth and the glory of youth. Would he notice? How much would he see? Or would his eyes be blind in their welcome of her?

The day that Carl had said she might expect him she rose early to make the apartment as clean and as familiar as love could make it. He'd miss the pictures, of course, on the walls . . . the picture of Bruce, too, that she'd put away because it frightened her—a little. So Carl's stood in the frame now. He'd miss the wedding presents, the books— But his typewriter still stood there, and the marble "Winged Victory."

She put a little red paper flower—a faded thing that had once been a dinner favor—in the cheap glass vase in front of Carl's picture. She swept the room and once stood by the window, looking out across the street, the street that had been bright with banners when Carl left home. Now a single, forgotten flag hung limply, rain-stained, snow-marked, torn and soiled.

She thought . . . a symbol. . . .

When Dr. Arndt had had his makeshift breakfast he went out to stand in the queue before the shops, to buy food. Pauli, kissing him good-by, said, wistfully:

"If we could only have something special for Carl. Not much, but a little, say, sausage?"

He kissed her. He looked very feeble. Her heart hurt her to think that he must go out in the slow, despondent rain that had been falling since dawn, to

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stand there, waiting, in his thin, patched boots. He said, cheerfully:

"We'll see. It's an occasion, after all, isn't it? How's the boy?"

"Restless," she told him; "he had a wretched night, poor baby. Father, I—I'm terrified about him. It isn't that he seems definitely ill, but—he's so thin—wasted."

"He'll be all right," Arndt comforted her. "Is the doctor coming to-day?"

"Yes, I think so. He said he would. He's terribly busy, at the hospital."

"I know."

When her father had gone she sat down to rest a moment. Looking about the room she thought suddenly how all the life in it seemed grouped about the small fire in the stove: the table pushed up close, the chairs. There was a rim of March frost on the window. The air was damp, it bit to the very bone. Pauli, in her thin dress and old sweater, shivered with more than the cold.

Early in the afternoon the doctor came, Arnold Meyer, an old friend of Professor Arndt's. He was a big man, once very stout. Now his flesh sagged on his large frame, his red, belligerent beard was peppered with gray, his face and eyes had the anxious, brooding, pinched look of a person who sees nothing but suffering. He came in the room and went with her to the bedroom where the baby lay quietly, uncomplaining but wide awake.

His examination was perfunctory. He knew what

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was the matter with Pauli's child. And he couldn't help. He put some medicine in the waiting glass, touched the thin, baby hand, and smiled at the smile he evoked. He followed Pauli back into the living room and sat down extinguishing his cigarette and lighting another.

"Well?" she asked him.

He moved his great, bony shoulders.

"I can say nothing, Mrs. Behrend," he told her. "You know as well as I what is the matter. Malnutrition. Rickets. If he could have good rich country milk, modified with limewater, and the white of new-laid eggs in orange juice, and the other things, cereals, bread-stuffs, beef juice——"

He looked at her, out of sad, sagacious eyes. Pauli smiled—a terrible smile, Meyer thought.

"I know. You might as well prescribe diamonds and pearls and pigeon-blood rubies. Oh, doctor!" she cried out suddenly; "it isn't fair, not to these little children. It isn't fair to them. We can endure it, I suppose, but the very old, and the very young, innocent, helpless——"

Meyer said nothing. After a moment he asked her:

"You've been to the hospital again, the ward nurses told me. You shouldn't, Mrs. Behrend. God knows the poor fellows love to see you come, but—well, you only tear yourself to pieces."

She answered, eagerly, her hands palm upward in her lap:

"No! No! Please don't worry. Just because that first day you found me crying in the corridors.

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I want to go. I can't often, because of the baby. But Mrs. Winckleman takes him, now and then, or father—and I can steal an hour for the hospital. That first day it was pretty bad, the boy who died there, quite quietly. They put up the screen—almost before one knew. But, oh, I like to be with them, they're so homesick, they are so childlike! Half of them don't know what it's all about. I can't bring them any luxuries or even necessities. But there's an old pack of cards there, you know, and I play with them; and try to understand their dialects; and laugh a litfle, and——"

She broke off. After a moment she went on:

"That boy in the—water bed, don't you call it? His face no bigger than my baby's. With those great brown eyes. He has a little table rigged up. We play games. His name's Joseph. He's only eighteen."

Meyer said, wearily:

"I know. *God!* Don't I know?"

He smoked furiously, a blue cloud about his fine, leonine head. He said, presently:

"They still—go out——"

"Yes. I saw a train puffing away from the station the other day," she told him, "just as a train came in. The returning cars were filled with wounded. The outgoing cars with—schoolboys. They had flowers—heavens knows where!—and a band even, and women saw them off. But there wasn't much enthusiasm, I tell you. The other train was on the next track. I looked at the men—the children—who were

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going out. I—Doctor, I went to a stockyards once. It was like that. The same expression—bewildered, mute, asking."

"I know," he said again.

After a silence Meyer spoke, cheerfully:

"I met your father yesterday. He tells me that you expect Carl home soon."

"To-day, perhaps. We can't be sure, there are so many delays, so much red tape. I haven't heard for some time. But he said to-day. We're going to get ready for him anyway."

Meyer rose, laying his still burning cigarette on the ash tray beside the two stubs he'd discarded there. He said:

"I must go. I'll be back, to-morrow."

She went to the door, holding it open, a very little. The cold struck in from the corridor. Meyer stood there a moment. He asked, suddenly:

"That violinist, upstairs, across the court. You asked me about him. I told him what you said, that he must come down and see you. He came so regularly to the clinic, hoping for—God knows what! Did he come to see you? You knew we had to take the third finger off, the old infection?"

Pauli had gone very white. She clung to the door-jamb. Meyer said, quickly:

"What is it? Are you faint?"

She shook her head.

"No. When did you—operate?"

"Last week, about Thursday, I think. He was to have come back for the dressings. By the way, I

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might go up and see—now that I'm here. I'd forgotten about him until I came. The silence reminded me. Generally the poor devil is practicing."

"Thursday. You needn't go. Father was going up to—persuade him to come down. It must be cold up there. And, he's alone. We didn't think much about him, before. But now— Don't go up, Dr. Meyer, he isn't there——"

"Not there?"

"Saturday morning," said Pauli, very low, "he tried to play with the poor hand, the hurt unhealed. Just once, drawing the bow across the strings. Then—we heard—a shot."

"My God! Meyer ejaculated, very low. "So that's why he hasn't been to the clinic."

"Yes. Father went up. He wouldn't tell me anything but—I knew."

"I'll go," said Meyer, after a little pause between them. "You mustn't stand here in this wretched draught. If—if only you knew someone in the country, Mrs. Behrend, who could bring you eggs and milk for the baby . . . at a price not prohibitive."

She smiled again.

"We do know someone. We never hear from her. It seems to me that she would have come to see us had she ever been in the city. We have written her over and over aagin."

He took her hand.

"Good-by. I'll do my best to get in to-morrow. If I were you, I'd write the woman."

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"I won't forget, she promised. "Thank you, Doctor. Good-by."

She closed the door and went to the bedroom. The baby was asleep. She came back to the stove, warmed her hands, went over to Carl's picture and looked at it. The gay-melancholy eyes of the dreamer, the sensitive mouth. . . . She would see them—to-day! To-day!

She picked up the picture and held it to her heart, a simple, emotional gesture. Her eyes closed. Warmth, warmth of her young blood, ran through her body suddenly. Carl! Carl! Three years a stranger to her, her lover and her husband.

Three short taps sounded at the door. Mitzi. Pauli put the picture down and turned as the door opened and Mitzi came in. Over her shabby house gown she wore a coat and on her hands were ugly woolen gloves. She said, as she came in:

"Didn't I pass the doctor in the hall?"

"Yes." Pauli crossed to the ash tray and put out, with singular care, the unextinguished cigarette.

"How's the baby?"

"Better," he says.

Mitzi sat down.

"Three cigarettes? He must have stayed a minute this time."

Pauli took the three stubs and laid them carefully on top of a box on the table, and turned to empty the ash tray into the stove. She answered:

"Yes. We talked a little. You can't blame the doc-

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tors. They're so busy at the hospitals. And Dr. Meyer gets here as often as he can. He won't take even the ridiculously small fee we could scrape together to offer him. He's been—dear. But he's so preoccupied, working almost twenty-four hours a day."

"Yes," Mitzi said, "and babies can't be patched up and sent back to fight. That's what the hospitals are now, mending stations. Tack the poor remnants together, and send half a man out again. He's better than none, heaven pity him!"

Pauli nodded, her small, peaked face dark with a sort of rooted despair. Mitzi asked:

"I suppose Meyer prescribed more food?"

Pauli put a stick on the fire. Rising, she recited carefully:

"Milk. Eggs. Limewater. Orange juice . . . other impossible things; a fairy tale."

"How long since you've seen an orange?" asked Mitzi, taking off the gloves and rubbing her chapped hands together. "And where on earth did you get the wood? It's worth its weight in gold."

"From the Prater, as usual. Father cut it. We don't often have such a fire."

Mitzi came over to the stove. She raised a sullen, desperate face as she commented:

"You wear your coat. In my flat, I—sleep in my clothes, Pauli—and so does Kurt."

"I know. But we built the fire for Carl——"

"Then you're sure he'll be here. To-day? When?"

Pauli picked up a sewing basket, filled with baby-

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clothes, and lifted out a packet of letters. Her hands touched them as tenderly as if they were of flesh and blood.

"Not before evening," she said.

Mitzi's eyes were dreadful. They were fixed on the letters—the dirty, scrawled, penciled envelopes—with a hot greed, an envy, a hunger. She murmured, very low:

"Letters. Pauli, if only I could hear something from Fritz—a line—a card—a word—just his name, in his own handwriting. . . . It's been so long! I tell you uncertainty is the grimmest hell a woman can burn in and still live! Uncertainty!"

Pauli had opened a letter. She read from it:

"'Home surely the first week in March!'" She looked across at Mitzi. "This *is*—the first week. And his next letter, the last said, 'as near as I can figure out, Wednesday.'"

Mitzi spoke, not hearing:

"Not a word, since August. August. . . . The Russians took thousands of prisoners in August. Every day I go to headquarters, like a beggar, begging for bread, the bread of hope, of knowledge—and they give me a stone. 'Missing.' Is there a more dreadful word? Pauli, it has more terror in it than *dead*. Where is he? What are they doing to him? Every night I——"

Her voice broke. Pauli went over to her, the letters still in her hand, and put her arm about the thin shoulders. Mitzi said, presently:

"What a lot of letters you've had!"

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Pauli looked down on the packet. A folded sheet of paper was on the top. She touched it, smiled.

"The first words on his typewriter. It was new then. Look at it now, poor battered thing!"

Mitzi nodded. She said, enviously:

"Carl stayed in France. That was your luck."

"I know. 'Promoted for courage in action!' " Pauli reminded her. Her eyes shone. They always shone when she thought of that. Of the decoration. But those were only symbols, signs and omens. They proved what she had always known. That he'd win through. Set his teeth in the face of all that was horrible to him, and conquer—not the enemy, that was incidental, but himself.

"I heard regularly," Mitzi told her for the thousandth time, told her breathlessly, as if it were a new tale, "until the regiment went East, and Carl stayed in France. That's where we've lost most men. Always victories, and more troops. More, always more, marching, marching, away, and never heard of again. Where do they come from? Where do they go? From the schools to their death, almost from the cradle! Did you see that battalion yesterday? Babies! If only they wouldn't march up this street —Fritz! Fritz!"

She stopped. Her voice was hoarse, like an old woman's. Like an old woman's drained of emotion.

"Fritz will come back," Pauli comforted her, also for the thousandth time. She moved away from Mitzi and sat down, near the fire, and repeated, heartenningly:

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"Fritz will come back."

Mitzi stared at her, with hollow, unbelieving eyes. A terrible cry went up from her, yet voiced in the merest whisper. She said:

"If I could only—*know!*"

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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THERE was a chill in the room; no fire could dispel it. The brave, hewn branches of the tall trees remembered summer and burned in red and gold and green. The stove glowed. But the room was cold, cold with the loss of Mitzi's hope. Yet Pauli was glowing with happiness and expectancy.

Pauli shook herself, mentally, physically. She reminded Mitzi:

"At least you saw Fritz when the regiment came through."

"Yes; I saw him. I was so—oh, Pauli, it was more than happy!—that I didn't see him. You can't understand what I mean. You'll learn, I suppose. I mean, I touched him, I knew he was there, but my eyes saw—the old Fritz. After he had gone, I saw him again—what he had really looked like; not Fritz at all, not Fritz."

"Carl hasn't been home since he kissed me, over there by the window. He's never seen his baby, but now——"

Pauli pulled at the folded piece of paper on top of the letter-packet. She slipped it from under the string that held the letters together, and smoothed it out. The first words: "I—love—you——"

She smiled, happily, gallantly. She tucked the

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piece of common paper, with the celestial words in common ink upon it, in the little pocket of her dress, over her heart. Mitzi watched her. And asked, desperately:

"Where's the sewing? Give me some."

Pauli gave her a dress, needle and coarse thread from the basket.

"What luck," said Pauli, "for us—that you saved Kurt's clothes."

Mitzi was quite still. When she spoke again her voice was pitiful. She explained, simply:

"I hoped I might—need them again."

There was a sound in the hall. Pauli's pale face flushed. Her heart beat, sickeningly. Carl? She said quickly, trying to hide her exultance, her hope:

"Is that the baby?"

She got to her feet, listened at the baby's door. He was sleeping, she knew. She was listening, for Carl.

The step passed, upward. Pauli turned away. Her heart sank again, pounded, was normal. She said:

"Doctor Meyer told me that most women, nowadays, cut up their sheets for the new babies."

She came back to the fire and picked up some sewing. Mitzi asked:

"Was he asleep?"

"Yes. He sleeps a great deal, daytimes—to make up for the bad nights, I suppose. Nothing wakes him but the bands. Whenever a band passes he wakes up and cries."

Mitzi nodded.

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"Maybe he understands."

Pauli laughed a little.

"*We* think he's a born critic. You ought to see him with books, or papers. He takes hold of all he can find—there aren't many now—and tears them, quite happily. If that isn't criticism, what is it?"

Mitzi smiled.

"Kurt was like that, too," she said. "He always preferred books to toys—when he was little."

Pauli turned a hem. Her roughened fingers kept catching in the thread.

"The baby will be all right, I'm sure," she said, "as soon as we get some milk——"

"How about Baruska?" Mitzi inquired. "She's on the farm, isn't she? Or did she leave?"

"I don't know. We've written and written, but mails are uncertain and we can't afford journeys, of course."

Mitzi started to speak. Hesitated. Dropped her sewing. Picked it up again. Finally said, with a sort of forced courage:

"Don't think me—meddling. But I'd write Mr. Behrend. After all, the baby's his grandson."

Pauli flushed again. She answered slowly, making a funny little gesture, half apology, half defiant resignation:

"I have written."

"And had no answer? What a brute he is! But now that Carl is coming surely he'll let you hear from him, his own son coming home, after all this time."

Pauli smiled across at her. She said:

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"I'll tell you a secret. Don't tell father, for mercy's sake. I took advantage of Carl's arrival and wrote, and this morning—well, I did get an answer."

"Forgiving?"

"Everything. I was a little astonished although I had hoped. But father insulted him really—well, almost beyond forgiveness. He had that carload of rice hidden, Mr. Behrend, I mean, and he came for advice and father said: 'I'm busy. Please go.' "

"I know," said Mitzi. "Was that really all?"

"No. You remember when it was? Just before the baby was born? Well, Mr. Behrend turned at the door and said, 'Let me know about Pauli. I'll come as soon as I hear news of her and the baby. You can reach me, night or day.' "

"And then?"

"And then father said, 'Come back when you've rice for what it cost, not a heller more. Come back then and not until then, you murderer!' "

Again that sound in the hall. Oh, those little, trivial sounds and the listening heart. Pauli rose again and went to the door . . . just a moment; then to the baby's door. Mitzi watched her. The dear, pitiful pretense. Mitzi knew, or once had known, the waiting for the beloved familiar step. Now, Mitzi listened, too—for the heavy tramp of an impassive, elderly postman.

She spoke hastily:

"It was—dreadful, I suppose. But somehow nothing seems so bad these days. I mean things like that

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. . . personal animosities—quarrels. And even if he were terribly angry, he's the baby's grandfather."

Pauli came back. The sound in the hall had ceased.

"You know Mr. Behrend. And you know father. He'd rather die than write or apologize. Father has nothing left but his pride and his principles. Anyway, he's coming and all I've got to do is tell father!"

Mitzi laughed, a rusty sound, as if laughter were strange to her, an alien thing, unused, half forgotten. She asked:

"Where is the professor now?"

"In the queue, waiting to buy food, since daylight."

"Food. That reminds me. I'd better go——"

"No—stay for dinner. I had it ready quite a while ago, before the doctor came; but I'm keeping it warm till father comes. I never know how long he'll be when he goes out like this."

"Well. Are you sure you can spare? . . . I'd love to stay. Kurt's still at school."

"Carl's not due till supper. I asked father to have something special for Carl. He promised. I know what he'll bring, if he can. Guess!"

"I can't."

Mitzi looked—very simply and starkly—hungry. She ordered, directly and petulantly as a child:

"Don't tease. Tell me!"

"Sausage!"

"Not really?"

Pauli rose and began to clear the table.

"Only enough for Carl, of course. Father's selling

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the best picture. 'Judas.' He took it down yesterday. We'd rather counted on 'Judas.' But it isn't every day that one's husband——"

She stopped suddenly. She couldn't bear Mitzi's eyes. The physical hunger was gone from them now, but they were starved—starved. Pauli asked, hurriedly:

"What time is it?"

Mitzi dropped the telltale eyes to the cheap little watch on her wrist.

"Twenty past one."

"Time goes so slowly!" Pauli complained, taking the picture of Carl and the paper flower to the desk. "There. By his typewriter. Carl loves bright colors. Like a child. He is a baby really, in so many ways. Father wanted to sell the typewriter, but I wouldn't. It was like asking me to sell something alive. And I was right, for it pays its board now, addressing envelopes."

She picked up a stack of envelopes and held them out.

"See? I rather like doing it. I'm learning to do them so accurately and rapidly. Only one's hands do get cold and numb. Mitzi . . . I'm going to wear my wedding dress to-day. Is that awfully silly and sentimental of me? It's the only nice one left. I've cared for it like a baby. Listen. I hear something. I know it. At the door. I——"

Mitzi rose. Pauli flew to the door. Her hand shook so that she could hardly turn the knob. She said, pleadingly, as if asking for help, "Mitzi?"

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She opened the door. The professor stood there, wiping his wet boots on the mat. He was very cold, his thin, worn overcoat soaked. In one ungloved hand he carried a string bag, with small parcels in the bottom of it, a meager looking affair.

"Father . . . oh, hurry and come in, by the stove. Have you got the sausage?"

"And a newspaper?" Mitzi called, eagerly.

The professor came in. Pauli ran her hands down his arms and sides.

"Oh, my dear, my dear! You're wet through!"

She took the bag and put it down. Dr. Arndt smiled at her.

"No, only my coat. Don't worry. It's not a real rain. Just one of those miserable mists, a drizzle . . . Carl?"

"Not yet."

"Of course not. It's far too early. And the baby —did Meyer come?"

"Yes. The baby's doing beautifully. . . . If only we had some milk and eggs we needn't worry a bit."

"If only—" repeated Arndt.

"Did you say you had a paper?"

"Here, in my pocket."

He fumbled in the pocket of the coat he had taken off.

"There's not much in it. Too much, rather. The casualty list is longer than usual. More victories."

Mitzi took the paper and relapsed into her chair. Arndt sat down, and stooping, began to unlace his wet boots. Pauli set the table, scantily—three knives,

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three forks, three spoons, three plates—on the bare boards.

"You'll see!" she comforted. "It can't go on, like this. It will soon be over."

Mitzi looked up from the black lists her eyes devoured, dreading to find that for which she sought. She said, dimly:

"Never over for me—until I hear."

"Don't worry," the old man bade her. "Fritz is probably quite happy somewhere in a hospital. You can't rely on the lists. And *I'm* not sure about the victories!"

"Did you get the sausage?" asked Pauli again, starting to untie the bag.

Arndt shook his head.

"No," he told her, reluctantly.

Her face clouded. She paused, a loaf of bread in her hands.

"Then we needn't have a fire in the kitchen!"

"That bread you're holding carelessly," said her father with a certain mordant humor, "is more than worth its weight—in worthless money. It cost seven thousand crowns. They kept changing the prices. Every time I counted my money again. Every few yards it was worth a little less."

Pauli brought him his slippers in silence, from their place by the stove. The professor went on:

"Whenever they chalked up a new figure people dropped out of the line. It was—pretty bad to watch. Mostly women . . . crying. Some men fought to get nearer and were beaten by the soldiers. There were

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times when it almost came to a riot. Not the first time. The windows in some of the shops were smashed yesterday. A man was killed. I—I fail to understand how money can be worth—nothing."

Pauli lifted a dish from the stove. She said, low:

"Dear, don't mind so much."

"The man next to me," continued Arndt, unheeding, "said that it was people who were selling short who caused the drop in values. Selling crowns they didn't have—billions . . . so that the value goes down and they buy cheaper when the time comes to deliver. I don't believe that. I can't. I won't. I don't believe that in all the world there's a man low enough to make his profit on the hunger of his countrymen."

Yet the thing was true. There were men who so manipulated the uncertain money market to the ruin of their fellowmen. Who purchased money, securities, commodities in large quantities, causing the value to fall and buying these things at a low price in order to pay for them. Selling what they hadn't; in other words, selling "short."

Pauli set the dish down. With quite an air, she announced:

"Dinner!"

The professor drew a chair up to the table and peered into the dish.

"Parsnips!"

"And herring!" added Pauli, with something of triumph.

Mitzi turned a page of her paper. She read, aloud:

" 'Another British Defeat——' "

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Pauli's eyes grew wide, lost. She said:

"I wonder if Bruce——"

Her father's glance was riveted on the scant, unappetizing food before him. He said, sharply:

"The English are starving us——"

Mitzi read further:

" 'Merchant Ships Sunk Without Warning!' "

Pauli shuddered. She commented, sincerely shocked, and wondering a little that any horror could still move her, who had lived through so many horrors:

"You don't mean it. How—*terrible!*"

"Why?" asked her father, his voice somber.

She turned toward him in astonishment.

"Why—? But surely you see. Oh, it doesn't bear thinking about—women—and little children."

The professor got to his feet. He gripped the edge of the table. His voice rose, shrilly, out of all control:

"Why? Is it more terrible to *drown* women and children than to starve them? Why? Anybody who is desperate enough will do anything. We're all barbarians . . ."

He raised his shaking, clenched fists in the air, a look of madness on his old, fine face, his haggard face. He cried out, hoarsely:

"God damn . . ."

He stopped. His curse, his curse upon the enemy, the British, was broken off as if it were a brittle thing. He called, like a child, shuddering with terror in the dark. He remembered, suddenly, and with overwhelming shame, his own horror when Behrend spoke of sinking merchant ships, drowning women and children. He

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reflected how hunger and want and care had transformed him into this animal, this hating beast; and he cried out, terrified by his own possibilities:

"Pauli—Pauli!"

Pauli's arms went around him; Mitzi's eyes were full of stinging tears. Arndt turned to his daughter and laid his head, bowed and humble, against her breast as if he were the child and she the parent.

"Don't let *me* hate! Don't let *me* become a barbarian!" he begged.

She stroked the thinning white hair in silence. Her lips moved, after a moment, unclosed on endearments, comprehension, comfort. Gently she forced him into his chair. He sat down, weakly, his knees giving. Mitzi, the back of her hand dashed across her eyes, drew up her chair at Pauli's silent signal. There was a pause. Then the professor, his face quiet, bent his head over the table and the pitiful food. His voice was very hushed but it had strength again, sanity, patience, and even belief. He prayed:

"For what we are about to receive, may the Lord make us truly thankful."

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CHAPTER FIFTEEN

ARNDT lifted his head and served Mitzi from the one common dish in the middle of the table. They all ate for a time in silence. Pauli cut the bread. She asked hopefully:

"What happened to 'Judas'?"

Arndt answered, his mouth ironically twisted:

"He went to a German——"

Pauli tried to smile; inquired:

"I see. For thirty pieces of silver?"

Her father shook his head. He replied, gravely:

"No one cares for beautiful things any more. All that is over. All the dreaming and the loveliness that colored life . . . the poetry and the joy——"

Mitzi broke in, hotly:

"Anyway—" she began; stopped, and ended scornfully: "The Germans——!"

Pauli looked at her in amazement.

"They are our friends," she reminded the other woman, gently.

Mitzi negatived this by a gesture.

"No. They got us into this. Is that friendship?"

Pauli lifted her eyebrows and glanced at her father. She knew that he remembered, as she did, Mitzi's warm championships and enthusiasms at the beginning of the war. She hoped he would say nothing. He was silent,

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however. What was the use? People's viewpoints altered with the waxing and waning of their larders. Any philosopher would know that. Pauli exclaimed, impatiently, as the bread stuck heavily to her knife:

"This bread is dreadful! It gets worse every day. What do they put into it?"

"Sawdust," suggested Mitzi.

The professor smiled.

"Everything but flour—depend on that. Fancy, in nineteen-fifteen that man from Dresden who called here with greetings from the Von Goetzes told me they still had some white flour there and one could get rolls. Not now, I imagine."

"We should make our own bread," said Mitzi.

Pauli sat down. Her hands, her feet, her whole body seemed curiously restless. She was on tiptoe, mentally, listening. She ate a little, pecking at the food, and argued:

"But how? That takes fuel, and besides we are only allowed half a pound of flour a week."

"I know. But one of the papers had a recipe for making bread without flour."

Father and daughter flashed into interest. Odd, how these trivialities impressed them. They were actually eager to here Mitzi's recipe. Pauli asked:

"Really? Tell us how."

Little Mitzi looked as mysterious, as wise, as the Delphic oracle might have appeared to avid seekers after knowledge. She answered:

"Well; you take horse-chestnuts——"

Arndt nodded.

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"It sounds palatable," he commented, gravely. "I doubt if it would give people skin diseases as the other stuff does."

Pauli looked up from her plate.

"It shouldn't stick to the knife," she added, "and that would be a great boon. I don't know why little things like that are so irritating."

"I saved the paper," Mitzi told them. "I'll cut the recipe out and lend it to you, Pauli."

Pauli was listening again. Surely this time it was the baby, crying, just a very little. She went toward the bedroom.

"If only Baruska would send us some milk," she said, as she moved away.

Arndt made a sound in his throat.

"She! Never! And not a sign of the mortgage interest."

Mitzi sighed. She said:

"If she'd send some food. Fowl, for instance. A goose, say."

Pauli came back again. She had been mistaken. It was a cat crying in the street, or another baby. She laughed.

"A goose! With a great, round brown belly."

Arndt laughed with her. But his tone was childishly wistful as he asked:

"Do you remember that goose—too?"

Pauli remembered. The birthday party. . . . She put her hand to her dress, felt the crackle of paper under her fingers. She said, low:

"Yes; the first Sunday."

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"Bread and gravy!" Mitzi cried.

"You forgot to say," Arndt told her, "*white* bread!"

"And . . . Carl," whispered Pauli.

"I had two helpings," Mitzi informed them; "and as for Kurt he stuffed himself so that his little eyes stuck out. . . ."

Pauli spoke, clearly, deliberately, her eyes on her father:

"He wasn't the only one. Think of Mr. Behrend."

The professor's pale face flushed. He turned his eyes away and spoke quickly:

"I wonder what he does now for his all-important Karlowitzer!" He mimicked Behrend's heavy voice, " 'Can one dress his wife in paper? That's what comes of writing!' Well, we're dressing in paper now—he was a prophet and knew it not—but he was wrong in his reasoning. It isn't because of writing."

"Speaking of Mr. Behrend—" began Pauli obstinately.

Arndt shook his head.

"No. We *won't* speak of him!"

"Oh, but father——"

Mitzi intervened hastily.

"If only we had that goose now, what part would you take, Professor?"

"Ah! Well, I always like the leg."

"Never!" Mitzi scorned him. "The breast. That's the delicacy—rich, moist, tender."

"Foolishness!" Arndt contradicted, indignantly. "Nothing can compare to a fat leg with plenty of crisp brown skin, a little flavored by strips of bacon roasted

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with the bird. Pauli always forgets there are only two legs. She thinks a goose is a quadruped. Pauli, my child, please, remember next time . . ."

He broke off. He had remembered. He added:

"It seems incredible: only three years ago!"

Mitzi nodded.

"Yes. Fritz . . . and we spoke of reducing armaments. And worried about Carl's play—and such a lot of little things. And at dinner we talked about Art, and argued, and got quite heated. And then the news of Bergman's Acceptance—and the Archduke's Murder."

Arndt smoothed his chin, the uncared-for beard. He nodded.

"Art! Now we talk only of food! What a commentary! A million years of man, and five thousand years of civilization. Five thousand years to a million is as three months to a lifetime. How much would the events of three months change our lives? And we talk of civilization!"

Pauli took her courage in both hands. She held her father's eyes with that larkspur blue gaze of hers, that honest, direct, loving look. She confessed to him shortly:

"Father, I've written Mr. Behrend."

For an instant he started, angry, rebellious, as an old war horse at the sound of the bugle. Then he slumped back, all the desire for battle gone out of him. He asked, evenly:

"Well? Is he coming?"

She looked at him, very tenderly. She felt, ob-

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scurely, as if her hand were on the hilt of the knife that was piercing his pride, as if she could see the blood draining from it, leaving it lifeless.

"Yes, dear, this afternoon."

He nodded.

"Dear, you'll be good?"

Arndt motioned assent again. Pauli got up and put her arms about him, drew his head back against her breast. He was her child, too, as Carl was, as the baby was.

Her eyes were wet. She went to the desk and got his pipe, came and gave it him.

"Nice little father! Here's your reward."

He took the pipe, cuddling the bowl hard in the palm of his hand. Round it was, smooth, grateful to the touch. But it was not warm. He said:

"Yes, but I've no tobacco——"

"You have!" Pauli cried out, producing the three cigarette stubs, as a conjurer does. "The doctor left these. Three. If you'd been home you might have had a whole one. What a pity he knows I don't smoke!"

Arndt reached for the little rolls, slit the papers and shook out every last grain of tobacco. He filled the pipe—well, not "filled," but there was a good deal left in the cigarettes, almost enough. And then he lighted it. A ceremony that. The first deep draw sent smoke above his head. He smiled, his face softening.

"Ah! that's *good!*" he said, simply.

Pauli took up her dishes.

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"I'll take these to the kitchen," she said.

Mitzi rose.

"I must go now . . . the place isn't cleaned up. It was so cold I couldn't drive myself to the work. But I'm warmed now. I'll get at it and have it done before Kurt comes. Thank you, Pauli. Rap on my door if you want me."

Pauli nodded. She looked happily at Arndt sitting there savoring his pipe. She carried the dishes into the kitchen, singing, as she went, one of the most charming of old lullabies.

"Gute Nacht!" sang Pauli. *"Allen Muden sei's gebracht——"*

Mitzi's bitter face relaxed. She said, softly:

"What a darling she is, and brave! If it hadn't been for Pauli I—oh, I don't know what I would have done." She patted Arndt's hand. "And if Mr. Behrend comes . . . think of the baby, remember."

She put on her coat. Arndt puffed contentedly with an abashed expression on his old face, which gave him an oddly boyish look.

"Mitzi. Come here!"

She returned to him. He beckoned her to bend nearer.

"Listen. *I* wrote to Behrend!"

"You!"

"Yes. Twice."

"And he didn't answer?"

"That he did not. No more than Baruska. He's a great scoundrel, that Behrend. No; I take it back; a

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little scoundrel: mean, sly, petty; not even a big, terrifying sin in him. Well, he'll come now; but I doubt if he can help us much."

"You must have quarreled quite dreadfully," Mitzi said, "or he wouldn't have been able to keep away from the baby. Pauli told me—you insulted him."

Arndt waved his hand.

"I only called him a murderer. He was glad to be rid of us, I think, because we're disgraced pacifists. He wouldn't come now but for Carl, depend on it."

"Nevertheless," Mitzi warned him, "do be good!"

She laughed into his gravely resigned face, and went to the door. As she opened it a woman who stood outside dropped the hand she had raised to ring. Mitzi drew back, astonished; guests were rare at the Arndt's.

"Oh, I beg your pardon? You wished to see——"

The woman brushed past her, stopped and called her by name.

"Yes. I. Why, Mrs. Winckleman!"

The stranger beamed expansively. Mitzi looked at her. After a moment she recognized Baruska, hidden under much finery. Baruska had ceased to look like a servant. She had almost ceased to look like a human being. She rather resembled a gayly decorated float at a carnival. She was dressed in her best, a Bohemian outlay of silk, stiff and gay, petticoats . . . a hat. She was a riot of colors clashing, of plumes waving. But from her huge hand a very prosaic basket depended, a large basket with shoulder straps.

Baruska was fatter than ever. Sleek, a well-fed look

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upon her. Mitzi, by comparison, looked as if a breath would blow her small person away. She gasped and said, incredulously:

"Merciful heavens! Baruska!"

The professor, who had been staring with all his eyes, echoed the name, in a tone even more unbelieving. Mitzi added:

"And looking—so grand!"

Baruska advanced into the room. She smoothed her expensive skirts with a fat, red hand.

"Well, we've got a piano!" she announced.

Mitzi's face hardened. She answered, choked:

"Really? How—nice! I've got—a little boy and I must be going."

She went out. The door shut—a little loudly. The professor shook his head, smiled. Mitzi hadn't lost all her spirit. That was, in a measure, a good thing.

Baruska beamed toward her erstwhile master.

"Ain't you gonna ask me to set down?" she inquired rather coyly.

He aroused himself from some sudden, deep preoccupation.

"Why, of course. Baruska, where have you been? We've written and written. . . ."

The peasant woman sat down, spreading out her petticoats.

"We didn't get any letters," she informed him; "and father was coming to see you, but things always brought so much he hadn't the heart not to sell them."

Arndt glanced toward the bedroom. He nodded. He repeated, meaningly:

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"Yes, I quite understand. He—hadn't the heart!"

"To-day I came in for the first time," she said.

Arndt looked at her keenly.

"The first time? I thought I saw you, not very long ago—at the market."

"Oh, no—well, to-day I've eggs. Well, I've only got five left now. I was thinking of you and Miss Pauli and the baby and when I'd sold my first half dozen, suddenly I thought of the mortgage."

"Really? What brought it to your attention?" asked Arndt.

"Half a dozen eggs," answered Baruska in triumph; "and there was the money in my hand; and all at once I says to myself, 'Why that's *more* than the mortgage!'"

Arndt said:

"More than—" He had not considered the shrinkage of money in connection with his mortgage.

"Certainly!" she informed him briskly. "Ten thousand crowns I had, and the mortgage is seven, and some interest. Ain't it—funny? So many—many years. And now I come, to pay off the mortgage."

Arndt nodded ironically.

"Yes. You're right, Baruska. It is—funny."

Baruska manipulated her voluminous skirts. From a pocket sewn in the uppermost petticoat she drew out a thick roll of bills, extracted one, held it up. "Ten thousand!" she remarked.

Arndt thrust a bewildered hand through his hair.

"I didn't realize. As you say, as many years' savings. How much *are* eggs?"

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"Two thousand crowns, *each*," she told him, her florid face solemn enough, but her eyes, small, big-eyes, shining from the rolls and creases of surrounding flesh.

"The loaves and fishes!" Arndt ejaculated. "My nest-egg has become—three."

"Four!" said Baruska.

He hesitated. She added, swiftly:

"But they're going up—every day—milk and eggs."

Milk and eggs—and that baby there in the next room. Arndt shook his head, in amazement, in resignation. Baruska held out the money—a slip of paper. . . . She said, with an air, and enjoying herself very much, "You can keep the change!"

He thought. . . . "Sir? Well, why should she call me 'sir' or—anything? Hasn't she the upper hand? He asked her:

"Will you give me—the eggs—instead?"

Baruska laughed, and felt in the basket for the eggs.

"Why not? All five! There! They're no good to me. Here! I must go now, I've a train to catch."

She laid the eggs in his hands. With infinite care he put them on the table, and told her:

"I'll mark the mortgage, 'Received Payment.' "

Arndt rose and went to the desk, unlocked a drawer, and brought back a heavy metal box. The key to it hung on a watch chain which no longer fastened a watch. He unlocked the box. Two papers were within it . . . two—in the great, locked box.

"Where's Miss Pauli?"

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"Out!" said Arndt shortly. Why should Pauli have to see this blowsy, prosperous woman, this woman who had been her servant? Who had no gratitude, who had nothing but greed?

"And the baby?"

"Sleeping."

"I'd like to see the baby again," said Baruska, sentimentally.

"Doubtless," remarked Arndt, writing his name on the canceled mortgage.

Baruska looked around the room. She asked:

"Well! What's happened to all them pictures? They were something to dust! Where are they?"

"Sold."

"Really? Why?"

"You can't eat pictures," Arndt told her, quite gently.

Baruska was silent. Then she pointed to the "Winged Victory" with a thick, commanding finger.

"You didn't sell that, I see."

"No," answered Arndt, looking up to follow her lifted hand with his tired, saddened eyes. "No, Baruska. Victory is still ours."

"Hm." She turned toward him abruptly. "Want to?"

He faltered. He felt a little sick, revolted. He murmured, dubiously:

"Well——"

"How much?" asked the practical Bohemian.

"It is very expensive," he told her.

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"Expensive? I'll give you—a hundred thousand."

"No."

"Two then!" offered Baruska, by no means niggardly.

"Two," agreed the professor. "But not in paper. In milk—and eggs——"

"Done!" said Baruska. "And I'll give you good measure."

Arndt handed the woman the paper.

"Take her, then—from the table. And here's your mortgage."

Baruska rose and with her ambling, clumsy gait of a dancing bear, moved toward the "Victory" and picked it up, putting the statue carefully into her basket. She stroked the marble body, whose lines flowed one into the other as articulate as music. She said, caressingly:

"Come on, my lady! You belong to us now!"

At the door she turned.

"I would like to see Miss Pauli——"

"Not now," answered Arndt, not stirring. "Next time."

"All right. When I bring the milk then. Good-by, and give my love to Miss Pauli."

She left the room, leaving the door open. Arndt bade her an abstracted farewell. He took his life-insurance policy from the strong box and looked at it. Looked from it to the eggs. Pauli must still be in the kitchen. Good thing she hadn't come in when that fat harpy had dominated the room. But eggs! Treasures! He must tell Pauli at once.

He put the policy back in the box, shivering from a

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sudden chill. Oh, the open door, of course. He turned.

In the doorway, one foot on the sill, stood Carl's father, August Behrend.

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CHAPTER SIXTEEN

LEOPOLD ARNDT stared for a moment in silence at the figure of his guest. The years had not taken away from Behrend, they had added to him. If he seemed heavier, he also appeared taller, by reason perhaps of a slightly arrogant carriage. He was better dressed than ever, his overcoat lined and collared with fur, the cigar he smoked of an almost prohibitively expensive aroma. He looked, to Arndt, like an apparition from another, and forgotten, world, standing there on the threshold. Arndt had the sensation that it would not be possible for Behrend to enter that shabby room, that he would dwarf it, that then the very walls would shrink back from him.

Behrend had never lacked for a steam-roller self-confidence. Success had always shone visibly from him. He carried success like a banner, a blunderbuss. Now, further, almost unbelievable success had added to his air of certainty. And his first remark, a question, had in it the quality of a deliberate challenge:

"Shall I—come in?"

"We invited you," Arndt said, formally. "Will you take off your things?"

Behrend came into the room, closing the door behind him. He disposed of his hat, stick and gloves, and flung his overcoat on a chair. Arndt turned his

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eyes away from the exposure of the luxurious lining; it seemed to him, indecent.

"My son hasn't arrived?" asked Behrend.

"No. We expect him presently, before late evening at all events."

Behrend sat down. He asked:

"How's the baby? I'm anxious to see him."

"Better, thank you."

"Better?" Behrend raised his eyebrows. "He's been ill then. You must remember that I only hear of—my son's family through mutual acquaintances."

"Not ill. Only undernourished," said Arndt. "But he'll be all right. He's going to have milk and eggs."

Behrend frowned. He remarked, brusquely:

"He could have had them long before—and all this worry and illness been avoided—if one of his grandfathers hadn't been a fool."

Arndt flushed. He answered quickly:

"And the other a—" He checked himself abruptly, and asked, with a complete change of tone:

"Well, what's the news?"

"Always the same," Behrend replied. No stopping us! Not even by corrupting our own people."

"Do you mean—the Czechs?" Arndt asked.

Behrend nodded, weightily.

"Yes. Only foreigners stoop to such treachery. They haven't our spirit, our willingness, to make sacrifices, our conviction of a righteous cause."

His voice was sonorous, he might have been on a lecture platform. He put his hand in an inner pocket, drew out a cigar case and offered it.

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"Have a cigar, Leopold?"

Arndt took the proffered cigar in eager hands. He thanked Behrend, rolled the cigar, which was long and thick and smelled sweetly of superfine tobacco, between his thin fingers. Then he put it away carefully in his pocket, wrapping it in a handkerchief, that it might not be broken.

Behrend watched him. In his eyes, on his face, there was a curious mixture of expression. Superiority, contempt, pity, and—almost it seemed an unwilling admiration. Behrend had always liked Arndt. He had been proud of his friend's learning. Before the war he had dismissed Arndt's principles and ideals as the mere vaporings of a mind much wisdom had made a little mad. But always in his secret heart he had been proud and envious. . . . Behrend was, essentially, self-made. He'd had "no time" for "higher education." He said he had no use for it, that it never made money. But, being human, he envied a possessor.

"And now America threatens," Behrend said, scornfully. "Because of the *Lusitania*. And they were warned, mind you, by the German Legation."

"As our Archduke was warned by Serbia!" Arndt reminded him.

"That's different," argued Behrend. "However, America won't fight. Nobody fights for a principle! There are ten million Germans in America. You can be certain that we are reaching them."

"As *they*—reached the Czechs," observed Arndt. . . . "But—that's different!"

"Quite!" agreed Behrend, unconscious of irony.

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He dug again into the precious inner pocket and reproduced the cigar case.

"Here. *Smoke* this one."

He held a match and Arndt obeyed him, drawing luxuriously on the cigar, with a face almost devotional. Behrend leaned back, and continued:

"With America in, there would be an end of civilized warfare. It's bad enough to use black savages, as the French and British do. But red Indians! Did you ever hear of"—his voice dropped, and he ended on a low and mysterious note—"of scalping?"

Arndt smiled through the smoke.

"Oh, yes!" he answered, gravely.

"You see," instructed Behrend, warming to his subject, "that's really a barbarous country. They burn people alive, Negroes. It's perfectly incredible, in this day and age. God's mercy, they can't get by our submarines! But, anyway, America won't fight. They're too busy selling munitions."

A slight sound made him turn. Pauli came into the room, a little hesitant. She went straight over to him, gave him her hand.

"Mr. Behrend."

Behrend took the hand in both of his and patted it paternally. He reminded her, gently:

"Call me—Father!"

"Yes," said Pauli, dubiously. Turning to Arndt, she saw the eggs, lying on the table. She looked back at Behrend again, smiling, eager.

"Oh! You brought some eggs!"

Behrend was painfully embarrassed. He cleared his

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throat and said, "Well—" in a deprecatory manner. Pauli touched his arm.

"Just what we need so much. How very kind!"

She saw him apparently struggle and mistook the embarrassment for something else. She looked apprehensively from her father-in-law to Arndt; asked, almost severely:

"What were you talking about?"

Behrend laughed.

"About savages, little Pauli, just savages."

Pauli went to the bedroom door and listened. Over her shoulder she asked, mildly astonished:

"Savages?"

"Yes. Foreigners," Behrend told her.

Arndt laughed.

"Oh, come now, August," he said, tolerantly.

But Behrend insisted on being taken with seriousness.

"Don't you read the papers? Right in the military dispatches. They drop bombs on churches and hospitals. They cut off the hands of little children."

Arndt's face sobered.

"And, what is worse, they probably say the same things of us!"

"Of us?" repeated Behrend, incredulously. "Then you don't believe these stories?"

"Do you?" asked Arndt, directly.

"Certainly. If you are a patriot you are bound to believe in outrages. They are necessary to stimulate public feeling."

Arndt sighed. He answered, slowly:

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"Whenever men, of all kinds, including the lowest, are turned loose, drunk with blood and hate, there will be certain excesses!"

Behrend's eyes protruded with astonishment.

"Excesses!"

He rose. Pauli came back from the bedroom door and stood by the table, her anxious glance going from one man to another. Behrend flung out an arm dramatically.

"Really, my dear Arndt! Do you defend the destruction of cathedrals?"

Arndt shrugged. He smoked for a moment in silence, and then answered:

"It isn't important."

"What!" shouted Behrend, the color and choler rising.

"No. When we are destoying millions of men," finished Arndt.

"You condone outrages on women?" asked Behrend, with the heaviness and directness of a steam hammer.

"All war is an outrage on women," Arndt replied, quietly. "All the outrages that follow are as nothing to that. The supreme criminal is not the animal in the trenches, but the statesman who declares war!"

Behrend's neck swelled. His fists clenched. Pauli felt her heart sink. Oh, must it begin all over? She felt that she had not the spirit to combat it, to act as a buffer between these two men and their antagonism. She hadn't the strength. And—Carl was coming home. To think that they could quarrel on such a day.

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She heard Behrend say, "Arndt!" in a voice of fury, and she intervened quickly:

"Mr. Behrend, you haven't seen the baby, and he's awake now."

Behrend turned to her.

"That's so," he agreed. His hands unclosed, the fever in his eyes diminished. He asked, "May I now?"

She went to the bedroom door and beckoned him.

"Come. He's the image of Carl. Look!"

Behrend advanced, almost on tiptoe, quite comically. Pauli opened the door for him and he went into the bedroom. Pauli, behind that broad back shook a warning finger at her father, and said, "When I come back I'll take the eggs into the kitchen."

She followed Behrend into the bedroom, and they both bent over the baby who was lying quietly, wide awake. He had a smile for his mother, a puzzled stare for Behrend. Behrend's eyes were wet. He blew his nose with a vigor that made the baby jump and laugh a little. Behrend was, *au fond,* a sentimental man. He had the sentimentality which so often is an adjunct of a bad temper and an overwhelming egotism. He touched the baby's cheek with his thick finger.

"Very like Carl . . . Carl was a handsome baby." Behrend praised his grandson. "Pauli—it was unkind of you to have kept me from my share of him so long."

She said nothing, merely picking up the baby; and Behrend continued:

"To think! I only learned by chance that the child was a boy, not just a girl!"

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"Have you no use for girls?" Pauli asked him.

"Oh, quite," Behrend replied, taking the pale child from her and lifting him high in his arms. "Girls are—well, they grow up to become good little housewives and mothers—like you, my dear. Decorative, too. But boys—well, a boy carries on the name, you see, and goes into the business. They become soldiers. By the way, I expect that Carl will go into the business with me when the war is over and he is discharged from the army."

The baby moved plaintively, and put a feeble hand to his mother. She took him from Behrend, put him back in the big bed, ranged the chairs about it to prevent his falling out, and gave him a homemade toy, a doll, stuffed with rags, manufactured out of an old white dress, the features sewn on in colored thread. She looked down at the child and spoke, gently:

"But Carl must go on writing——"

Behrend waved a hand, tolerantly.

"Oh, yes. Now that his first play showed some promise. It is a pity it could not have been produced, after all. But as a hobby, my dear, not as a life work. Very great, very successful men have had hobbies, painting, writing, collecting, and what not. Carl shall write of course. In his holiday-time, as a relaxation. But I am convinced that the sterner life of the battlefield, the hardships he has been through, will change his outlook. He will come back to us a different Carl—Pauli, a man, with a sense of his responsibility!"

Different? she thought. Oh, not that. Not with the

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love of beauty dead within him, the sensitive heart hardened. She asked, quickly:

"You've heard from him, often?"

"Occasionally. I've written, quite regularly, and managed to send some boxes."

"Yes, he told me so."

"I had to tell him, of course, that your father and I had differed, otherwise he would have wondered why I had seen nothing of you since just before the youngster's birth."

Pauli nodded. She had written too. She recalled Carl's answer:

"You are my family . . . you and the boy. No one else matters. Please do not distress yourself about your father's quarrel with mine. . . . All the paternal affection and understanding that has come to me has been from *your* father, Pauli."

During their absence the professor had been looking about for a safe place on which to lay the eggs. They might be jarred off the table! They would roll from the sideboard! His eyes fell upon the strong box, as it lay there, still open, the insurance policy in it. He realized, quite suddenly, with a resigned and humorous irony, that the policy representing the savings of almost a lifetime was worth nothing—that the eggs, those five fragile things—meant—*everything*.

With a shrug, and a half smile, he tossed the policy carelessly aside and gently laid the eggs in its place. One almost slipped from his fingers. His heart missed a beat, literally. If he should break one! He was still shaken with the escaped danger when Pauli and

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Behrend came into the room, the latter expatiating loudly upon the baby:

"A fine boy! The Behrend brow!"

Pauli nodded. She told him simply:

"I always said, 'I shall have Carl while I have his baby!'"

"And he is—how old, exactly?"

"He was born in April, nineteen fifteen," said Pauli. "He is very nearly two years old——"

"Does he walk?" asked Behrend, jingling some coins in his pocket.

Pauli's face clouded.

"Not yet. The doctor says not to worry; he hasn't been properly nourished, you see."

She went to the table, looked for the eggs, discovered them in the strong box, and smiled at her father.

"I'll take them out—and bring you back your box," she said.

Behrend pulled a handful of gold from his pocket. Round gold pieces, shining, yellow. He dropped them one by one on the table,

"I don't do things by halves!" he announced. "Here we have them: a gold piece for every month of his life, and that makes twenty-two."

Pauli clutched the strong box and gasped. Arndt said, his lips shaking a little, trying to laugh:

"If he were only my age!"

The tension snapped; they all laughed with him, and Pauli walked sedately away with the eggs. But her heart ran, her heart danced. Gold! Gold for the

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baby! Gold that would buy—milk and eggs. Oranges, beef juice!

Behrend swaggered away from the money on the table. He asked:

"You've heard about Muller?"

"The lawyer?" asked Arndt, puzzled.

"No, no; not Joachim. Heinrich," Behrend informed him. "Your old comrade, at the University."

Arndt's face sharpened to eagerness. He heard very little of the University news now—he'd no chance to listen to the gossip and talk of the place since he stopped going to the Coffee House. He looked an inquiry at Behrend, and Behrend nodded.

"He's been honored. He's won a medal!"

Arndt asked, breathless with excitement:

"How wonderful! What a gift to mankind!"

"Isn't it?" said Behrend. And Arndt went on:

"A cancer cure! How proud he must be! His life work, his research, justified—he has conquered death!"

But Behrend only snorted contemptuously.

"Not that! A poison gas, a new one, invincible!" He added, "Great man, that Muller."

He turned in his pacing, looked at the bedroom door, and jerked a thumb toward it.

"Fine boy, that. Small, but the square chin of my family."

Arndt was lighting his second cigar. He was in an excellent humor, even the news of Muller's—he termed it "downfall" in his mind—could not shake him. He commented, smiling:

"My country is the greatest in the world. My city

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is the greatest in the country. My street is the finest in the city. My house is the best in the street. I am the head of my house; and we call that—patriotism!"

Behrend looked at him. He was honestly puzzled, as one is puzzled by meeting something totally strange; a new animal, say, or a visitor from Mars. There was no annoyance or anger in his tone, but sheer bewilderment, as he asked:

"Have you no pride of race?"

"We are of so many races," argued Arndt.

Behrend shrugged at the distinction. He inquired, modifying his first question a trifle:

"Well, then, let us say of country?"

Arndt's thin face flushed, his eyes shone. He answered gravely, with a note of real exaltation in his voice:

"I am very proud of being an Austrian!"

"Ah!" commented Behrend, satisfied. "You see? But still you——"

Arndt broke in, laughing.

"I am proud of being a professor. That doesn't want to make me kill all the lawyers!"

"But you'd defend your home?" Behrend pursued.

"Yes," answered Arndt. "I'd defend my home, by making it impossible to attack it." He chuckled. "I beg of you, don't ask me to sleep with a pistol in my hand and be proud of the civilization that makes such measures necessary."

"This is a war to end war!" said Behrend.

"So was the Franco-Prussian war," Arndt reminded him, skeptically.

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"These people who starve us—" began the well-fed guest.

"As we starved them in seventy-one," interrupted Arndt.

"They must be crushed to make the world safe," continued Behrend, ignoring the remark. "And then——"

"Then," Arndt interpolated, lowering his voice in mock solemnity, "then comes a—Peace Conference!"

He added, as Behrend nodded:

"And war always begins with the peace conferences. This war began, my friend, in eighteen seventy-one."

Behrend shrugged. He was becoming irritated.

"When we shook hands with our adversary."

"Yes. And took his watch!"

"What?"

"Alsace-Lorraine!" explained Arndt.

Behrend, who had been lolling back in a chair for some minutes, sprang up again.

"You wouldn't have us give back thousands of square miles!"

"To hold which we have kept sixteen million armed men!" countered Arndt.

Behrend shook his head in dismay. He said:

"Remember, *originally*, it belonged to us!"

Arndt sighed. Answered, gently:

"Whomever it belonged to, it has cost ten million lives. Is any strip of territory worth that—to anyone?"

"A population of two million——"

"Which spoke another language!" Arndt broke in.

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"What of *their* pride of race? For half a century French school children have been taught that they must get back Alsace-Lorraine! When will we learn that, while pride of race survives, God makes the only lasting boundaries?"

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CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

PAULI came to the bedroom doorway. She had a dark cloak thrown about her and carried the strong box in her hands. She stood there listening anxiously. The voices of the two men were not yet raised, but she felt instinctively the atmosphere of hostility between them.

"Our people would never have consented!" she heard Behrend asseverate.

"Our people were never asked!" her father said. "A few generals wanted Metz for strategic purposes. When will we learn that friendship is the only strategy and good will a greater protection than machine guns?"

Behrend shrugged impatiently.

"All nations hold what they have won!" he declared.

"How long?" his friend asked him. "Five thousand years of war, from the beginning of history, and what have they accomplished? Always the vanquished return to their flags and their faith. The real conquests are of peace. From Sesostris to Napoleon, who holds what he has won?"

Pauli sighed. Impossible that these two men should meet in amity and on a common ground. She came into the room and put the strong box on the table, gestured toward the gold.

"Here's your strong box," she said.

Behrend ignored her. He was staring toward Arndt.

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He had dropped back into his chair again, and now he smote himself on one fleshy knee with the palm of his hand.

"Well! I must say—for a pacifist!" he ejaculated.

Pauli laughed. She asked, teasingly, in an effort to restore the peace, "Have you never heard of a fighting pacifist!"

Her father shook his head at her.

"I don't fight!" he asserted. "I dislike no one!"

"Very well," Pauli agreed; "but for goodness' sake don't wake the baby!"

She went back to the bedroom. Behrend rose, followed her, looked in once more, and then closed the door upon her and the child. When he returned to the table the professor was looking at the insurance policy before returning it to the strong box.

"What's that?"

"My life insurance," answered Arndt.

"When does it mature?"

"Next September."

"Turn it in now," Behrend advised him. "Money is going down fast. If I were you I'd do it to-morrow. By the end of the week, who knows? Every day billions of crowns are dumped on the market."

The professor looked his incredulity.

"You mean to say, people are 'selling short'?"

"Exactly!" said Behrend.

Arndt shook his head, his mouth set.

"No, August; I don't believe it!"

Behrend smiled tolerantly. He swayed a little on his heels as he gave proof:

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"One does not expect you to know much of business," he admitted generously. "But listen. A month ago, my friend, I sold five hundred million crowns. Today I can buy them back at half the price. A clear gain of two hundred and fifty millions."

Arndt got to his feet. His face was like ashes. He asked:

"*You?*"

"I! In another week it will be five hundred millions. Every heller the crown drops now is so much profit to me."

Arndt took his head between his hands. He couldn't believe . . . the thing was beyond his comprehension. He asked, painfully:

"That is to say, when the crown is worth less?"

"You have it. When the crown is worth less, I am worth more. Five hundred millions. That's money!"

The professor's voice shot up. He cried:

"No! No! Not money. Blood and tears!"

Behrend flushed. He answered, trying to be patient, holding on to his temper:

"My dear Arndt, I don't *want* to quarrel——"

Arndt ignored him. He raised his hands. He prayed, aloud, simply, pitifully:

"God! God, keep me from hate!"

Arndt had not found it difficult to keep from hating the enemy. Only once had he lapsed into the prevalent hysteria, and that had passed quickly as realization came to him. Yet now he was finding it increasingly hard to keep from hating, despising, one of his own countrymen. His emotions of hate were

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stirred, not by what a nation does, but what an individual does, no matter what his nation.

Behrend looked at him. The thought passed through his mind, "Is this man mad? A little mad?" He was frightened at the thought. He said, in a tone he intended to be soothing, calming:

"But—really—Arndt——"

One word shot from Arndt, like a bullet. He ordered, grimly, dangerously:

"Go!"

Behrend stiffened. He leaned forward, incredulous.

"You say——?"

"What I said before! Go, and don't come back! You—murderer!"

Behrend drew back, terrified. He expostulated, angrily, querulously

"But I want to see Carl—I tell you!"

Arndt glanced toward the bedroom door. He lowered his voice, answered:

"He won't want to see you—when he knows!"

"Knows what?" asked Behrend staring.

"That you're betting with his life; making a profit on his agony!"

"Just phrases," sneered Behrend. "Carl's no worse off because I'm better off! One takes what he can get!"

"Blood money!" said Arndt.

Behrend, who had risen, swung around on his heel, and then back again.

"*You* take it!" he accused.

"What?"

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Behrend's thick finger shot out, indicating the money on the table.

"Twenty-two gold pieces!"

Arndt propelled himself forward. In a single sweep he had brushed the money from the table. It fell jingling. It rolled here and there upon the floor.

"Take them!" Arndt commanded.

"You're mad!" Behrend answered, not stirring.

Arndt *was* mad, in that moment. He was beside himself. He did not know his own voice. His whole slight frame shook with righteous anger, rage.

"From the floor," he cried. "On your knees! On your belly! Crawl! You can't stoop as low to regain them as you stooped to get them!"

Behrend's difficult, unusual control broke. He said, furiously:

"You damned pacifist!"

"You damned traitor!" Arndt answered him.

There was a pause, tense, hot, terrible. The bedroom door opened and Pauli came in. She wore, under the shabby cloak, the gray silk frock which had been her wedding dress. Singing, softly, in the other room, piling her blond hair on her small head, crooning over the sleeping child, she had heard nothing of the quarrel.

"I'm going for Mitzi," she called, "to hook my dress——"

She broke off. She looked from one to the other of the glaring, rigid men. She looked down at the floor, at the gold pieces.

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"Father! The money!"

He did not answer her. He could not. Pauli crossed the room and stooped, swiftly.

"I'll pick it up," she said.

Arndt's throat worked. He flung out an arresting hand.

"No!" he thundered.

Pauli looked at him, and from him to the bedroom door. Silently she reminded her father of the baby. Arndt's head drooped. He said, quietly:

"I'm sorry. Go get Mitzi."

She understood. Drew her cloak about her and left the room, her heart sick. Stiffly, Arndt knelt. Piece by piece he gathered up the money. Now and then a coin slipped from his cold, shaking hands; he had to recover it. Behrend, bitter and unrelenting, stood over him, watched him, hard and triumphant, unwilling to miss a gesture of this victory. Then he went to the chair and shrugged himself into his overcoat.

There was silence in the room.

Through the door Pauli had left open a man entered. Not a man, but something that had once been Man. A creature who shambled in on swollen feet, dirty, unshaven, with peering, shrinking blood-shot eyes, clad in a tattered, filthy uniform. This was a wreck of a man with the wreck of a mind. He staggered into the room, moving as one does in a trance, a dream. He stared—stared, as if in unbelief, as if in hideous doubt.

His bitten lips parted. An inarticulate sobbing ani-

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mal cry came from them, a cry wrenched out of his soul, a cry that finally translated itself into a single, pregnant word:

"Home!"

Behrend had drawn back, a little alarmed. He asked, low:

"Who is it——?"

Arndt rose from his knees. He looked into the dirty, almost imbecile face; and cried out, in horror, in pity, in amazement:

"My God! *Jan!"*

Jan was crying. The tears ran salt down his unclean cheeks, lost themselves in the matted beard. He sobbed:

"I'm safe. I'm home."

Behrend stepped forward. He asked harshly:

"Where's my son?"

Jan wavered toward a chair. The words that broke from him were difficult, painful, as if each was edged with cutting steel:

"I don't—know. Don't—ask—me."

Arndt seized him by both arms, held him upright and steady.

"Where's Carl?" he demanded.

Jan's dirt-rimmed red eyes stared into his. He mouthed ineffectually for a second. Then he said, dimly:

"Dead."

Behrend cried out, sprang forward.

"The man's crazy, I tell you!"

Arndt gripped Jan tighter.

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"When? How?"

His voice was devoid of expression. He knew. His hands relaxed slightly. Jan shook himself free, put his hands across his eyes.

"I don't know. Don't ask me. *For God's sake, don't ask me!*"

In the silence that followed Arndt and Behrend heard Pauli's voice in the hall.

"It's my wedding dress," she was saying, gayly, "and hooks all over everywhere. . . ."

"Pauli!" groaned Arndt. He moved nearer Jan.

"Don't say any more now," he warned the man.

Behrend, very white, intervened.

"You're sure?" he pleaded, desperately.

Pauli was coming nearer. Her hand was on the door knob. She said, laughing to Mitzi:

"Such hooks!"

"Just where you can't get at them," Mitzi answered.

"Don't, don't!" said Arndt, very low, the tears held back. "We must break it to her. Jan, stand there. Say nothing. Quickly!"

He pushed the man back, but Jan broke from him, wavered, standing as he was, near the door. Pauli, entering, came toward him, talking to Mitzi over her shoulder:

"Carl tried to help me out of it and broke his finger nail. Poor Carl. You would have thought that he——"

She had seen Jan. She stopped, looked—hard—harder. Then cried out:

"Jan!"

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Mitzi came in and Pauli called to her, gayly:

"Mitzi! *Carl's home!*"

But the silence of her father and Behrend held her. She looked from one to the other. Arndt said, with an effort:

"No, not yet."

Pauli began running about the room with little short steps. She said:

"Oh, I know Carl's jokes. He's hiding! Carl! Don't be silly dear! Carl . . . I want to see you!"

Arndt wrung his hands. He said, in a shaken voice:

"Pauli——"

Behrend's control broke. He tossed a hand, palm upward, an empty hand, and said, slowly:

"My boy!"

Pauli stopped and looked at Behrend. Her face began to whiten. Her lips shook. She asked, piercingly:

"What is it? What do you mean?" She turned and faced Jan, came nearer to him, stared into his eyes; asked him, very sharply:

"Where's Carl?"

Jan shrank back. Her eyes held his. He tried to turn away from her eyes. He could not. Her eyes drew the truth from him as a magnet steel. He answered, dully, moving his head restlessly:

"I don't know."

Arndt intervened hastily:

"He's been detained. He's been hurt. He's been——"

Pauli lifted a hand. She spoke one word, quite quietly:

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"Killed," said Pauli.

"No, no. We're not sure," her father told her. "We must wait——"

Mitzi came forward. She cried:

"Don't say that. Anything's better than waiting!"

"Oh, no," answered Pauli, still with that terrible calm. "Go in to the baby, Mitzi——"

Mitzi went to the bedroom door, stood beside it, her hands to her eyes. Pauli turned back to Jan.

"Jan! What's happened?" She flung out her arms, included Behrend and Arndt in her pleading. "If you think you are doing me a kindness! Ah . . . *Jan!*"

Jan answered, low, as if hypnotized:

"He's dead."

She took it standing. Her heart had known for seconds of time that seemed eternities. She asked:

"How? He was coming home."

"Yes," agreed Jan. "We was coming home."

"Go on," ordered Pauli, quietly. Her father moved to her side. Gently, she gestured him away. Stood there, listening. Alone.

"It was a long trench," the man told her, "and night. And raining. Part of the trench was covered. We was coming back from the first line. The whole company. Miles. Black. We got lost."

His voice was low, even, expressionless. His eyes stared into unspeakable horrors. His body twitched. He was not a man in that moment. He was an Accusation.

"Miles, bent double, in the dark and mud—and we was tired, and we kept taking the wrong way. Out-

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side it was hell. Big guns. I said, 'I can't go on.' And the Captain put his hand on my shoulder, and I could hear his wrist watch—ticking."

The listeners heard how Pauli cried out at that . . . a soft cry . . . quite dreadful.

"And I dropped back," Jan went on, "a little. And then, I don't know what happened. A mine maybe, or a shell. Right ahead everything went to pieces. Up in the air. In a big flame. Men, too. One man I saw with his head off. There was another with his guts hanging."

Behrend was a sickly green-white. Arndt said sharply:

"Never mind that, Jan."

Pauli asked, low:

"Carl?"

"I don't know," the man told her. "It was like hell. Like day—with the guns and the rockets and the shells. . . . And behind us the trench was caved in and we couldn't go back. We fell on our faces and dug into the mud. And it rained bullets and guns and shrapnel. Next to me a man was shot in the throat. And in front of us, almost near enough to touch . . . was the man who'd been blown up."

Behrend spoke hoarsely. He asked:

"All—dead?"

Jan nodded.

"And the bullets chugging into their bodies. . . . Tearing open their bloody faces. Hours. Like that. In the mud and blood and water. You couldn't reach

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them. Nobody could reach 'em. One man *wasn't* dead——"

"Stop it!" the professor cried. "For God's sake, *stop!*"

There was a pause. Pauli stood, straight, slim, her hands at her side. The two elder men were motionless. Jan shook continuously. Through the bedroom door which Mitzi had opened there came the sound of drums in the distance. Mitzi spoke, dully:

"More troops," she said.

Pauli turned her head a little.

"Mitzi, go into the baby; he'll waken."

Jan fumbled for a chair. Sank down in it, his head in his hands, shaking, twitching.

"Oh, Christ!" he said.

Arndt went to his daughter, touched her.

"Pauli—you frighten me. Don't look like that! Be brave. . . . Don't, Pauli. . . . Pauli!"

"He was coming home," said Pauli, without stirring, her face old, her lips white. Yet a drop of blood ran from them.

Behrend choked. The drum beat loudly below. Very loud and brave, the drums. Behrend said, gently:

"You've got your baby, Pauli."

She answered, listening:

"More troops!"

Jan shook. Jan flung his head back and gasped for breath. He heard the drums. They beat upon raw nerves, raw wounds, raw memories. He said, again:

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"Oh, Christ!"

A scream tore through the room and drowned the drums—a woman's scream—Mitzi's. She shrieked:

"Pauli! Pauli! *Pauli!*"

Pauli turned. Stood a moment. Then ran like a mad thing into the bedroom. The three men were alone. Behrend leaning on the back of a chair, tears shining on his cheeks. Arndt, bowed, broken. Jan, twitching and grimacing in the chair.

The drums crashed. Far down the street another band passed by. "We're going to rush the Russians," played the band.

Pauli came to the door of the bedroom. Her cloak was gone. She stood there, slim, in the little gray wedding gown. She said, tonelessly:

"My baby's dead."

Arndt flung out his hands. He said, frantically:

"No! No! No!"

"The drums didn't waken him," Pauli told them, still in that gentle expressionless voice. "He's cold. Don't go in. I know."

Mitzi stood back of her. Arndt looked toward her, and Mitzi, crying bitterly, nodded. Arndt stood still. Pauli repeated, her voice rising again, in a sort of puzzled wonder:

"My baby's—dead."

Mitzi tried to put her arms around her.

"Pauli," she pleaded. "Pauli, darling——"

Pauli stood free. She spoke slowly. Words issued from her lips. She repeated things she had heard Mitzi utter, things she had heard her father say to

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Behrend. Not a sentence originated in her mind. Her mind was incapable of originating sentences. She simply reiterated familiar phrases—parrot like—in her abnormal condition, her hysteria.

"Listen! More troops! More! Always more! Where do they come from? From the ends of the earth! From the beginning of time, to the end of time! Marching! Babies still unborn. Their mothers still unborn. Marching!"

"Stop her!" Mitzi cried out, in terror and despair, to the silent men.

Arndt took a step forward. Made a supreme effort. Forced her name to his white lips.

Above the distant music a trumpet called, silver and clear, sounding "Assembly."

Suddenly, triumphantly, but very quietly and with a marvelous serenity, Pauli spoke again.

"Not *my* baby!" she exulted. "He won't answer your trumpets! He'll never feel mud and agony and the bullets tearing up his face! I've nothing more to feed your guns! My baby's safe! My baby's dead! Thank God! *Thank God!* THANK GOD!"

The martial music passed. The martial music stilled, the room was very hushed.

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CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

THE doctor had come and gone. All the pitiful arrangements had been made. Mitzi put her Kurt in charge of a motherly woman, an old friend, living near by, and stayed with Pauli. She felt as futile and unnecessary as most people feel under similar circumstances. Yet she knew that she had to do something—had to be with Pauli in her black hour. Always in Mitzi's mind there was an undercurrent of dread. . . . "Shall I be next? Shall I be next . . . ?"

Behrend stayed, too, wondering helplessly about the flat, old, curiously deflated with his honest grief. Arndt took mercy on him several times, gave him small errands to do, allowed him to make the more practical of the arrangements. Arndt was very sorry for his friend and antagonist . . . sorrier, in a way, than he was for Pauli. Pauli had had Carl. She had had her love and the carnate expression of that love. But Behrend had nothing save money, not even memories. He'd never had the real love of his son; and, what was worse, he'd never loved the boy selflessly and passionately. He could not look back upon their past relations with sorrowful joy and without self-reproach. Poor Behrend!

The professor had risen amazingly to this tragic crisis. He was more like himself than Mitzi had seen

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him in many months. He was a rock of strength, serene, understanding, luminous with comprehension and tenderness. He held himself in readiness to help Pauli when she should turn to him, as he knew she would turn. But not now. Now, for a time, her curious exalted mood held her; she was not quite human, she was the spirit of womanhood rather than a woman.

That was a long night, the night that was to have been Carl's homecoming. Pauli watched by her baby, or walked about the little living room. She had not wept, she was dry-eyed, quiet, in each cheek a dangerous spot of brilliant color. Her eyes shone, they were blue stars. Now and then when one of the others approached her she had a word for them, abstracted, kindly indifferent. Once when she found Mitzi crying her heart out in a dim corner, she put her hand on her shoulder and said, "Hush . . . after all, there are millions of women like us."

A long night.

Pauli stood by the window and waited for the dawn as she had waited that other morning, long ago. As the sun touched the roofs of distant houses and reflected, palley golden, on the windows, she thought, in astonishment, "It isn't possible, another day." She wondered to find herself still living, still breathing, still going through all the mechanical gestures of existence.

She looked out over the street and at the bedraggled banned, unseeingly enough. She thought, "Carl has gone. And his son has gone. And I am alone."

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She tried to believe it. She could not. She was still filled with the fierce, rapturous knowledge that her boy had escaped from life. She had not had time, as yet, to consider herself and her own bondage to living, had not had time for self-pity, for the grief of the bereaved which is sorrow for self and not for the dead.

The sun rose, radiant. Pauli turned from the window and went to Mitzi and put her arms about her.

"You've been awfully good," she said, "please forgive me if I said anything to hurt you——"

They took the baby to the quiet cemetery where his grandmother had slept these many years. And then came back to the empty, cold house. Pauli went straight to her bedroom and shut her door against her father, against Mitzi. She wanted to be alone, she told them. Behrend, his eyes very red, returned to his house, which was also empty, and sat idly scrawling figures at his big desk in an overcrowded library. He had made a lot of money—during the hours when, for once, he had not been thinking of it. At this moment it meant very little to him. It would have value in his eyes, again, more value perhaps than ever, when the first shock had passed and when his money game would be a distraction to him as well as a life business. But just for a little he sat and drew triangles and circles and squares and thought of his dead wife and his lost son and his son's son. There was a little cold comfort at his heart. He had said to Arndt:

"After this, there mustn't be enmity between us, no matter how wrong I think you—or you me. You

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can't refuse to let me help you now, you and Pauli, in Carl's name. I—I do beg it, Leopold."

In all humility he had made the offer, that was in reality a plea. And Arndt had understood. He'd answered, simply:

"Thank you, August. I'll remember and ask you if we need you——"

It had cost the professor something to make the promise. But in a way he had considered it an atonement. He shuddered to the depths of his soul to think of his quarrel—he called it "brawl"—with Behrend while the child lay dying soundlessly next door and the father lay dead on a trampled battlefield of terror.

Alone, in her room, Pauli lay on her bed and thought of Carl. Life was going to be very hard for her. She had never realized before how closely Carl was bound up with all her memories. Not as the young lover and husband and comrade, but as the child playmate. Since her babyhood, all through her life, Carl, Carl. She remembered the first day she had realized that she loved him. They'd been about eighteen, the two of them. He'd come to the flat and talked and talked of all he wanted to do. Of the great things he meant to write. Of how famous he was going to be. And she'd listened, not for the first time, and found her mind wandering, discovered she was hearing more vividly the sound of his voice rather than the sense of the words themselves; that she was thinking of the way his mobile face shone and his eyes dreamed, of the way his hair grew over the broad forehead . . . of his lean,

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artistic hands and the set of his shoulders. And she had said to herself in a lovely slow amazement: "Why, I love Carl!" And then he'd cried out, laughing, "Pauli! What is it? On my word, I believe you're blushing!"

Yes, it had been like that, a slow growth, a sudden, starry knowledge of maturity. Then had followed all the years when he hadn't known, had loved her in his heart, all the time—oh, she knew that, he'd told her so—but hadn't known, not consciously.

Now she had to take up the pieces of her life and mend them somehow and go on living.

The days passed, and still she had not wept. Arndt watched her in terror as she went about the flat at her little household tasks, played with Kurt, addressed the innumerable envelopes, received the few friends who called when they heard of Carl's death. He thought, "It can't go on like this, she must break down. This isn't natural or healthy. It frightens me. If only we could make her cry!"

When Carl's identification tag was found and sent back Arndt held his breath thinking that now the outbreak, the outlet, would follow. But it did not. She turned the thing over and over in her hand, her eyes absent, her mouth taut. She said nothing, only looked at her father with those gallant, hollow eyes in which dark misery sat shrouded, and pride.

One day there was a knock at the door. And at Pauli's call Baruska came in, bustling, bedizened, carrying her loaded basket. She set it down and took Pauli's hand.

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"I'm so glad to see you, Miss Pauli," she said, breathlessly. "The professor told you of the arrangement we had made? I couldn't get here before, but here I am now, and I've brought the things. May I see the baby? I have the eggs, the good eggs, for him there and the milk—fine, fresh milk."

Pauli stared at the woman. Her father had said nothing of Baruska's first visit. Her eyes traveled slowly from the beaming self-satisfied red face, over the silk skirt and laced bodice, down the the basket, the eggs in their wrappings, the bottles of milk. She repeated slowly:

"Milk and eggs."

Suddenly she grew very white. Arndt sprang anxiously to her side. She did not move gently away from his arm as she had since her loss; she merely leaned against him and said, low:

"All—too—late——"

Then the tears came.

Mitzi, who had been sewing by the stove, came forward and took the uncomprehending Baruska aside. Arndt helped Pauli into her room and laid her on the bed. He sat there beside her, holding her in his old arms for hours. She cried herself to sleep there, like a child.

Then, slowly, she was herself again—as much herself as she would ever be, as any woman could be. She had been perilously balanced in the first few days. Now she was normal again, she still retained her secret sense that her baby was where nothing could hurt him again, no insanity of statesman, no lunacy of nations. She

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still knew a deep gratitude that Carl was safe, too, that he would not come home to her crippled and wrecked, as Jan had come. But she had met her grief face to face, she no longer avoided it. She came to grips with it and acknowledged its strength.

Now, she must turn to something, must love something, must mother someone. The love she found in her father, whom she had always loved, whom she loved tenfold now that he was all that was left to her. And for her brooding, maternal spirit, there was Jan.

Jan had not left them, they had given him his quarters in Baruska's old room. For a long time he lay there, huddled on a chair or in the bed, shrinking when anyone opened a door suddenly or spoke to him abruptly. Sometimes they heard him screaming in the night. He could not seem to bear their hands on him or their eyes. But little by little he was growing more accustomed to the idea that he was really safe, that nothing could hurt him again. But the memories terrified him still. When Pauli took him in charge he told her that. He said, over and over, "I can't forget, I can't forget."

She soothed him. She said:

"It will all come right in time, Jan, and the ugly memories will pass—" But he cried out so pitifully that her eyes were filled with tears.

"No; it's all shut up—in here—" He struck his breast and then his forehead with his poor hands. Pauli understood.

"No; don't shut it up. Let it out. Tell me. Tell

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me all you remember, as it comes to you. Then you will forget."

He looked at her in an anguish of gratitude. He had no mercy on her, of course; he could not think of her, only of himself. Often in the night he would call her, "Miss Pauli—Miss Pauli—" And she would put on her wool, old stockings, and the shabby dressing gown and slippers, and go to his room with a candle and sit beside his bed and hold his hot hand and listen and listen—to things that turned her deathly sick and cold, that aged her, that marked her forever. Then, after a time, he would sleep and in his sleep he would look like Jan again, the old, boyish Jan, dog-faithful, dog-eager and friendly.

Arndt argued with her:

"Pauli, you're killing yourself. You must not hear such horrors. Call me, instead. I'll do, won't I?"

"I suppose so, dearest. But I want to. It helps him. It will make him well. If he prisons all those things in his poor mind they'll canker and fester and he'll be—permanently mad. No. Let me care for him, father. I don't mind. Oh, of course I mind," she added, with her splendid honesty. "I mind terribly. But—in a way it brings me to Carl. I see, vicariously, what he has seen; suffer, vicariously, what he suffered. And Jan will be cured. We'll cure him."

As the boy grew better she found him little, distracting tasks to do. She even taught him to knit. She bought wool at extortionate prices with Behrend's gold pieces, and she and Mitzi and Jan knitted for the soldiers, long mufflers, sweaters, and socks. She saw

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as Jan grew stronger that he must find other work than that, she set him to keeping the stove burning, to helping her in the kitchen. It was a long time before they dared allow him to venture out on the streets, but little by little that time came too. He was very crippled but able to get about, able to stand for a time in the food lines until Arndt came to take his place; able even to help get wood from the Prater. He was months getting back his health, as much health as he would ever have. But he came out of things sane. He came out sobered and quiet and not given to laughter, but whole in his mind and able enough in his body to help his friends. And with a devotion in his heart to Pauli and her father that was like a steady flame, burning night and day, fed always, everlasting.

Then Fritz Winckleman came home.

Before he arrived Mitzi heard from him again. His letter told her very little save that he was alive. When it came she was like a woman gone out of her senses, flew screaming to Pauli and Arndt, threw herself in their arms, cried and laughed, and fainted. That was hard for Pauli . . . harder than Mitzi knew; but Arndt knew. He saw her white face and her shaking hands.

But when Fritz came home it was Pauli who helped Mitzi. For Fritz was an old man, nervewracked, sullen, dangerous. Suspicious of everything and every one. The worst of his shell shock had passed, his wounds were healed . . . superficially. But his soul was irrevocably scared.

Kurt ran from him, crying with terror. He did not

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recognize in this haggard, hoarse, hysterical man his exuberant and laughing young father. There were times, too, when Mitzi almost fled. Nothing but her love and her pity kept her in the room with him when his "spells" came upon him and he talked rapidly and rebelliously, laughed, cried, cursed . . . until he and she were exhausted.

Pauli could help here. Her experience with Jan had taught her. In her turn she taught Mitzi, how nothing but tenderness could reach these men, firmness, understanding. . . . And Mitzi learned, little Mitzi, who had been so gay and so irresponsible, who had leaned, a little childishly, on her Fritzi. Now it was he who must lean on her, now it was her shoulders that must bear the burden for them both.

Behrend came often to the Hahngasse. He had eliminated the money question once and for all by settling a small income on Pauli. He would have made it larger, but she refused. As much as she finally was willing to take he gave ungrudgingly and wished it more. She took what she did for several reasons. First of all, to be sure of food and fire for her father. Then to help Jan, for Jan had to be supported; and finally, to be able to help Mitzi. Mitzi was past pride in taking any assistance, for Fritz was in no condition now to take work—even provided he could find it. She and Pauli invented many little white lies to account for the appearance of necessities.

So the year passed, Jan growing better, Fritz at home, America in—and then—the Armistice. A day, for the Arndts, not of riotous rejoicing, but of sober

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happiness. It was over—the killing and the brutality. Not the poverty and the pinching. But at least one could go to bed at night without thinking, "How many beloved lives are being snuffed out while I sleep? How many women will wake, soon, to mourning? How many men are dying in anguish and loneliness while I sleep?"

August Behrend was, of course, as loud and aggressive in defeat as in victory. Yet the Arndts were not wholly without understanding. It was a tragic thing to see the other man's bewilderment, his uncomprehension. He could not grasp that things "had gone wrong"; he was noisy in his asseveration that "somewhere there had been a blunder." He was bitter against every one in turn. There was no grace in him with which to accept defeat silently. He had believed so long in the righteousness of war when it was "his" war that he could not understand the situation in which he found himself—that of a native of a conquered country. He was raucus in his grief and his amazement. For he had lost his belief in the invincibility of his cause and no man is the same who loses what he has lived by for many years.

So they suffered him at the Hahngasse flat and let him rave himself into comparative quiet. At least he had not lost his money. He'd taken care of that. And the first secret hinting at defeat had reached the money bags first, and Behrend knew how to take care of his own.

In a way, they told each other again, Behrend had lost more than they had.

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And what had Austria lost? She had thought herself victorious so long. Not until the panic-stricken soldiers poured back upon her could she realize her defeat. Vienna woke almost overnight to the sight and sound of these conquered, beaten men. And knew herself the mother of the conquered.

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CHAPTER NINETEEN

At last Carl Behrend's play was produced. After all the years between. Even when the thing was an established fact, the play in rehearsal, the date of production set, Pauli and her father could hardly credit it. When they finally grasped it Pauli was radiant with happiness. She knew that Carl must know. She She thought, "How many times, out there, must he have thought of his play, his precious play; must he have realized the wisdom and sanity of it, as he never had before!" The writing of the play, in times of peace, had been, Pauli thought, almost sheer inspiration. Then, he'd had to go through with all the things he hated, the things he'd cried out against in his work; he'd seen, he must have seen, how right, how inevitable, were his views. He'd watched them work out, out there in the thick of it. And now—he must know, know himself vindicated!

After his death she had taken the play up many times, sitting there alone, and slowly turned the pages, reading and wondering; blessing him for his vision; wishing with all her heart that other people could be made to see through Carl's eyes, made to feel the power and rightness and truth of his thought, his purpose. And now it had come about. Other people would see, other people would feel with Carl. The play could not fail. The play *was* Carl. Carl had not failed.

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And in the play Carl's spirit spoke, warning people against the thing that had, eventually, destroyed Carl's body.

The professor, too, was happy for Carl, happy for Pauli. He remembered something that he had never told his daughter. How, in the old dreadful days, the last days in which he visited the Coffee House, men had turned from him, had avoided him, men who he thought were his friends. The explanation had been simple enough. His position during the war, the loss of his seat at the University, the discrediting of his name . . . And there had been more. There were angry rumors throughout Arndt's circle that not only he was a pacifist, but that his son-in-law had written a play advocating peace. . . . These rumors had started before Carl went to war, and continued, not at all dimned by the fact that Carl was fighting, at the front, for his country.

Bergman had been partly responsible for this. Bergman had liked the play, had seen in it great dramatic possibilities, had considered it, from the showman's point of view, "good theater." And had wished to produce it. And then the war came and changed matters. Bergman was taking no chances of being hounded out of the city for producing a "disloyal" play. Bergman always followed the mob. He had accepted the play because he felt it would make money for him, and fame. Then he had refused to produce it, had flung it back, contemptuously, because from a standpoint of his own safety and his own pocketbook it was not good or wise business to produce it. Then

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the war ended and the people were swept away in a great revulsion against war—all wars—any war. Now, thought the astute Bergman, now is the time! And so he had come personally to Pauli, a little, round, suave man, and had begged her for the manuscript of her husband's "so great play which circumstances prevented me from producing some time back, to my *great* regret, I assure you, Mrs. Behrend!"

Pauli was scornful of the little man. Yet she put her scorn aside. She was not at all blinded by his phrases, his explanations. But Carl's play mattered to her . . . mattered terribly, mattered more than anything else in her life. So she gave him the manuscript.

Now, she sat with her father at the play's opening. She saw the actors through a mist; their words, their speeches came to her from a great distance. Surely it was Carl speaking now? Surely that was herself, that other Pauli?

The people were sitting forward, tense. Some wept openly. Arndt, cold with nervousness, looked about him. How were they taking it? Were they understanding it? Or were they merely swept away by the dramatic surge of the play, by its emotion? Were they feeling with their hearts, or thinking with their brains? How much of real truth did they recognize when they heard it?

When the great speech that had hate for its subject—the whirlwind of hate—came, the audience rose and cheered. Cheered until the house shook with it. Cheered themselves hoarse. Pauli sat quite still in her seat, the tears pouring down her cheeks, her eyes wide

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open. "Carl," she was whispering to herself, "Carl. Can't you hear them, dear? They are cheering your play. They are cheering your vision. They know, Carl. You have made them see . . . Carl . . . Carl . . ."

Arndt took her hand and held it in his own. His eyes, too, were dim, he looked at her and whispered as the cheering died:

"Carl is a great author, Pauli."

Her heart replied:

"And always my lover!"

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CHAPTER TWENTY

BRUCE GORDON was coming back to Vienna . . . after five years. He sat in the railway carriage and read over Pauli's last letter. He'd been hearing from her frequently, these last months. Ever since he had been able to send her the first letter. He smoked his old pipe and looked out at the flying landscape. Pauli; how would she look? What would she say to him?

His heart was still sore with his sorrow at Carl's death. He'd been very fond of Carl . . . no one could quite take Carl's place. But Pauli—to have lived through that! What must her life have been, when Carl was away—after Carl had gone away forever? She told him very little. Once, in a recent letter she said "things are much better now." That meant, in plain English, that they had been very bad.

Now he was going back. To take up his studies again. He'd fought his way through the war years and his new knowledge had rusted. He'd have to put in a good bit of time brushing up, taking all the "p. g." courses he wanted as well. There was this new facial surgery which the war had developed. He wanted to study that, too. Oh, there were years of study and work ahead of him! He couldn't take them all at once, of course, but he'd have the summer with Pauli

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and her father before he went home again. And after that—well, who knew?

He still loved her. He realized that. All through the years of separation, the red and black years, the knowledge of his love for her had been in his heart. He'd done his job, too, a soldier's job, doggedly, without complaint, not talking much about it all, you understand, just going ahead. But in his mind one thought uppermost: to live long enough to see her again. He had to see her, Carl's wife, Carl's love. He knew that, too—but—there wasn't a bullet molded which could kill him until he'd touched her hand once more and heard her voice—Pauli's voice.

He looked at his watch. Would the journey never come to an end?

He'd written them not to meet him. He wanted to come home, in the old way, to the old things, to his friends. He wanted to see them first in the surroundings he remembered rather than in a vast impersonal, echoing station.

He was shaken with unusual excitement when the train pulled in. The luggage disposed of, he drove to Hahngasse, paid off the driver and went up the steps two at a time. He hadn't to knock, they were listening for him. Almost as he reached the door it was opened to him and Pauli stood there, and the professor.

"Bruce!"

Inarticulate as ever, he almost wrung their hands off. He said, breathlessly, at last:

"You really will take me in? I've sent the trunk up— Lord, but it's good to see you!"

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He spoke to them both. He looked at Pauli.

She answered, between laughter and tears:

"And you—and you!"

Arndt hauled him by the arm. The professor was as vigorous as Bruce remembered him, a little whiter perhaps, a little sparer and certainly growing faintly querulous. He announced:

"Why keep him standing there, Pauli? Do come in, Bruce. You'll have your old room."

Bruce went in. The room was much as he remembered it, save that the pictures, the new—new when he last saw them—wedding gifts and the casts were not there. But the place was neat and cheerful and dear to him through familiarity. He'd not seen it in its lean days—so that much had been spared him. The dining room was no longer a bedroom, Pauli having moved back to the room that had been hers as a girl. In the living room the typewriter still predominated—on a new table. And a smaller table held, only, Carl's picture; before it a vase with a single red flower in it.

Bruce beamed around and mopped his brow.

"By Jove. Just as it used to be. And hot for June, what?" he asked, looking about him with satisfaction.

Presently his big trunk came and he settled in and they had supper and after supper a long talk, under the electric light which had been restored to Vienna. Jan was away for a few days trying to find work in the suburbs, and the three friends were alone. Not even Mitzi had been invited for this first day. To-morrow would do.

They talked of the professor's work at the Univer-

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sity, of Pauli's typing work, of Bruce's journey—but most of all of Carl's play. Then Bruce gave them his surprise.

"Who do you think traveled here with me, to see Carl's play?"

"Who?" asked Pauli and her father, in a breath.

He didn't answer for a moment. It seemed to him he could never have done with looking at her. Little and dear—and the same. The gray in her hair made her seem pitifully lovely to him, somehow, as if a beloved child had powdered its bright hair in play. . . .

"Gaunt!" he told them finally. "The English producer I told you about. He traveled part way with me; stopped off, however, and I came on. He'll be here late to-night, I think—motoring from somewhere. I told him I thought there'd be a matinee to-morrow. We can all go, can't we?"

Arndt said, keenly:

"You made him come——"

Bruce smiled. Pauli broke in, tremulous:

"Bruce—how very wonderful of you——"

Gordon shook his head.

"I promised Carl," he reminded them, gravely.

After he had gone to bed he lay thinking, back in the room he knew so well. Of Pauli. Of the professor. Of Carl. And most of all of Pauli's baby—who had not lived. He said, over and over, "Pauli—" just her name, uttered silently in his heart, with all his love and pity in it.

The next day they met Gaunt at the theater and Bruce witnessed a performance of Carl Behrend's play

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"The Enemy," which had been running for some weeks. He sat between Gaunt and Pauli, his face impassive but his hands clenched. It was a great play, a noble play. Would Gaunt see that, would Gaunt realize?

Glancing furtively at the stout, dark-haired, quiet little man beside him he watched the effect of the play upon him. Now and then Gaunt flushed, with excitement. Once he nearly rose from his seat. More than once his hard, clever eyes filled. Bruce nodded, satisfied, yet somber. Gaunt had seen. It would be all right, for Carl's play— But too late for ten million Carls!

After the matinee Bruce went with Gaunt to his hotel and Pauli and her father walked home. She said:

"Every time I see it it seems better. Every time I get something new out of it."

The professor smiled. He answered, gently:

"Yes, I too. We didn't realize it wholly—before. Carl was—sheer genius. He told us a great truth before even he had proved it for himself. Now he has. And we have too. We know."

They entered the house and went up the stairs. Coming into the living room, Arndt said, laying aside his hat and stick:

"Past five. But look at the sunlight!"

"It's the twenty-ninth of June," Pauli reminded him laughing; "not far from the longest day in the year. . . ."

"Bruce *loved* the play," said Arndt, fetching his pipe.

Pauli took off her plain, broad-brimmed hat. She looked very pretty in a simple, inexpensive little frock

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with a bunch of roses tucked in at the belt. She went straight over to Carl's picture.

"I know," she said to her father; and, to the picture she added, "Do you hear that, Carl? Your friend has seen your play and *loves* it!"

"I wish you wouldn't talk to that picture!" complained Arndt, ramming the tobacco home in his pipe bowl with an accustomed thumb.

"I don't."

He shrugged. Then smiled.

"I know—I understand. I'm getting crabbed."

"You mustn't," she told him, "with Carl's play such a success and Bruce back home. The same Bruce. I wonder what is keeping him?"

"He had to take Gaunt back to the hotel."

"Yes, but they rode. We walked," she said. "Listen, isn't that someone in the kitchen?"

She went to the door and called,

"Jan?"

Jan's head appeared. He nodded, rather grimly.

"No luck?" Arndt asked briefly.

"No, sir. Not a thing in sight."

"Never mind," Pauli comforted. "All in good time, Jan. We couldn't spare you yet, anyway."

She came back to Arndt and said, low:

"It looks—hopeless—for him, doesn't it?"

Arndt nodded.

"Work—for a partial cripple?" he asked bitterly, "People aren't altruists now, you know."

After a silence Pauli said:

"Oh, I hope Bruce's friend buys the play!"

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"Yes. English money has some value," her father commented, sitting down and stretching his old legs.

"And Carl will be so proud of a London production," Pauli went on. "Too bad Bruce and Mr. Gaunt couldn't have been here for the first night, to hear the people cheering that speech about hate!"

"They'd have wanted to stone him for it a year ago," remarked Arndt.

"To-day they yelled 'Bravo!' " she said.

"Yes. Too late for Carl," answered Arndt, gloomily.

Pauli lifted her head. She said, proudly, tenderly:

"Too late for ten million Carls. But it may help for the Carls to come. . . ."

The bell rang. Pauli ran to the door, opened it.

"Don't ring!" she ordered the guest who stood there, smiling. "You *live* here! Well?"

Bruce came into the room. He said, quite dramatically:

"September in London!"

Pauli exclaimed. Arndt asked:

"And the terms?"

Bruce produced a notebook, looked at the recent memoranda it contained;

"Two hundred pounds in advance."

Over Pauli's gasp the professor said incredulously:

"Two hundred?"

For an answer, Bruce handed him the notebook.

"Yes. Payable to-night, at eight, when we dine with Gaunt at his hotel!"

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"What kept you?" asked Pauli, her face flushed with pleasure.

"We met Bergman. He told us he'd never doubted the play for a moment. And he introduced us to the man who wrote 'We're going to rush the Russians.' "

"And didn't," the professor commented.

Bruce looked puzzled.

"Didn't write—?" he began.

"Didn't *rush*—anybody," Arndt explained. "But he made a good deal of money telling other people to do it!"

"Hush!" implored Pauli softly. She dreaded the bitterness that so often now appeared in her father's tone.

"Well, anyway," intervened Bruce laughing, "the author said that our play is pro-English!"

"So did the papers," said Pauli.

"In England they'll say it's pro-German," Bruce prophesied. "People don't understand the effort to be pro-Human. Anyway, Bergman confesses it's a success and quite admits that he's responsible!"

Arndt had been reading over the memoranda and figuring mentally. Now he asked:

"Is it really possible to earn a hundred and fifty pounds?"

"Yes," answered Bruce, his heart heavy for his friend. He knew more now than his first entrance had shown him.

"*In a week?*" persisted Arndt.

"Gaunt says so."

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"But that is fifty-two million crowns! More than I would make in a year at the University. Well! To-day we have—*coffee!* We shall be as rich as Behrend. We have little cakes with our coffee. . . . Where's my hat? Perhaps we have sugar! Tell Jan! And don't be surprised if I bring butter. We're millionaires!"

He snatched up his hat and went from the room. They could hear him humming down the hall. His footsteps died along the stairs. Pauli and Bruce laughed. Then Pauli rose, took the roses from her belt and put them in the vase before Carl's picture. Bruce looked at her. A last ray of sunlight, strong and beneficent, touched her hair to a pale amber and silver glory. He said, slowly:

"Your hair's very beautiful——"

She touched it with the immemorial gesture of women.

"It turned white quickly—afterward," she said.

He knew that it was very gray. Here and there the young golden color still persisted. Gray and gold it was, like her life.

"Tell me what happened," he begged her. "Tell me everything—you wrote so little really, and we've not been alone since my arrival last night."

"You know what happened, Bruce."

"Yes; *that.*"

She went to the typewriter, and sat down, sorting out the scattered papers. She answered, cheerfully, with no rancor:

"To the end we believed ourselves triumphant.

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Even in October the papers were full of victories. And then, suddenly, that flood of panic-stricken soldiers. The rest—you see."

"Yes," he said, simply.

"Chaos and despair. Buildings with their plaster fronts scaling off. We call that 'Vienna Leprosy.' The streets crowded with beggars and cripples."

"It's the same in London," said Bruce.

Pauli did not hear him. She said, musingly:

"The Fruits of Defeat."

"And of Victory—" he supplemented.

After a moment's silence, heavy with their separate memories, she asked:

"You were at the University this morning, weren't you, to ask about that summer course?"

"Yes."

"Then you've seen the memorial," she said. "'Carl Behrend' at the very top!"

"I could just make it out," he told her.

"The names are fading," Pauli admitted. "However, it doesn't matter. No one goes to the University."

"There are crowds in the coffee houses," Bruce remarked. "What's that new one? Dreadful, blatant place—quite unlike anything I've ever seen here?"

Pauli shrugged.

"Oh yes—that. They're all filled with profiteers. They rule everything. We still pay for the Emperor's carriage, only now it belongs to a butcher."

Bruce leaned forward. His even tones were colored with warmth as he asked her again, urgently:

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"Let that pass. Tell me, now, about *you.*"

She smiled at him.

"Me? I make out. I earn quite a lot with your typewriter."

"And the professor back at the University?"

"He's all right too. They sent for him."

"But's he's still a pacifist."

"Oh, every one is a pacifist now," said Pauli. "Especially the soldiers."

"And Behrend?" asked Bruce.

"Very rich and more pompous than ever—since 'The Enemy.' He comes here quite often, and he'd like to help. . . . He does help, you know, but he'd like to help much more. But of course we don't need it. I take the income he gave me to help other people. We can live on what we earn. But I feel I have no right to take something that will lessen the immediate misery of those all around us."

Bruce rose.

"Pauli," he said, "I'd like to——"

A sound behind him made him pause, swing around. To his astonishment he recognized Jan, who limped in. He was even more amazed to hear Pauli say:

"Oh, Jan—coffee for three."

"Coffee?" repeated Jan, as if he didn't believe his ears.

"Yes; and ask Mrs. Winckleman to come over," Pauli pursued. She thought, "Mitzi must come. Bruce mustn't say—what he will say. I can't bear it —not now."

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"Oh, not yet," Bruce begged her.

Pauli shook her head at him. To Jan she said:

"Don't say who's here."

As Jan went she said, smiling:

"I haven't seen Mitzi all day—and I didn't send word that you had arrived although she knew we expected you. We—father and I—were selfish about wanting you to ourselves first."

Bruce asked, low:

"Jan's—badly cut up?"

"Lame. He can't find work, so we've adopted him."

Jan, at the door, caught the last sentence. He stopped and turned to say out of that forgetfulness in which more wars are bred:

"Yes; after all the glory! A hero! Twice mentioned! Those were the days! Thrill and excitement! The big guns and the shells! Like fireworks . . . and your life, or the other fellow's! There was something to that! Now I'm stewing coffee!"

Pauli looked at him as one does at a naughty child, raised a grave forefinger and started to speak. But at the sound of his name Jan said, hastily, "I'm going!" —and went.

Pauli turned back to Bruce, smiling a little.

"He—you mustn't mind him! He's like a sulky child now and then. He was—terribly hurt, body, soul and mind. We nursed him back again, you know. Now, he's forgotten the horrors that rode him, thank heaven! and remembers only—the adventure, the action. It galls him, a man, to be doing—well, women's

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work. Poor Jan! However, he's all right now— It's Mitzi that breaks our heart—she's the worst off."

"But Fritz came home!"

"Oh, yes. And now he's back on the paper, but they don't really want him. He was badly used up: a prisoner, and months getting back from Russia. You should have seen him. All filth and great sores and the bones coming through his skin. Now—well, you can't blame him, when you think what he suffered. But, Bruce, can you understand—I'm glad it's not Carl."

Jan appeared at the door again and crossed the room.

"She says in ten minutes," he reported.

"Coffee for four," said Pauli; and Jan gave vent to an audible grunt as he crossed the room on his slow progress toward "his" kitchen.

Bruce drew deep breath. His tone, as he next spoke, was resolute.

"Pauli——"

"So you were a soldier, too," she forestalled him. "You'd just graduated. I couldn't understand. Why didn't you go as a doctor?"

"Even in war, there are limits to butchery!" Bruce told her, laughing.

"Did you—hate us?" Pauli asked, gravely.

"You!—and Carl? What do you think was the first thing I did in London?"

"Enlisted?" she hazarded.

"I went to see Gaunt."

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"Oh," said Pauli, gratefully. "I thought that was much later."

"I told you before," he added, quickly, self-depreciating, "I had promised."

Pauli was deeply moved. Her soft eyes dwelt on him, lingeringly. She hesitated a moment and then spoke—to the picture.

"You said he'd forget, but you were wrong, my dear."

After a pause, Bruce said:

"I've a rotten forgettery." He got up and went to her, stood by her. "Do you remember when I first came to Vienna, Pauli?"

"Yes."

"Do you remember—a conversation? You said you loved Carl."

"I still love him," she answered.

"But now he's gone," Bruce told her gently.

"Oh, no, he isn't!" she cried out. "And I promised, too—'I shall be waiting,' I said . . . 'even if you don't come back, I shall be waiting.'"

"Carl said . . . once," answered Bruce, his face very tender, his eyes pleading, 'I can't ask her to wait so long.'"

"It isn't long!"

"He said, 'I won't have her in a dingy room!'"

Pauli spread out her hands, palms upward. The room was filled for her, illuminated, with the presence of her dear dead. Her heart was filled. She answered:

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"It isn't dingy! Carl said to *me* once, 'I shall be a great author and always your lover.' He is a great author and he will always be my lover!"

Bruce said, very pale:

"Pauli . . . I can wait too. . . . When the time comes I shall be waiting. I won't speak of it again, my dear. I've hurt you, but I'll wait."

Her eyes misted. She gave him, impulsively, her hands.

"Wait, then," she told him. "But, please, as my friend. I have need for a friend, Bruce. But I have never lost my lover."

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CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Mitzi's knock sounded at the door. Pauli turned away from the look in Bruce's eyes, from his outstretched hands, and opened to her friend. Mitzi came in, slowly.

"I'm not hooked," she announced. "Will you—?" She caught sight of Bruce and stood quite still.

"Bruce Gordon!"

He took her hands in his and looked at her aging, careworn face, and spoke her name, with a friendly warmth that touched her deeply. He was deeply moved at the tragic change in the lighthearted girl he remembered so well. She put one hand childishly to her mouth, but for all her effort at control, a sob tore its way past the barriers and the tears streamed down her pale, thin cheeks. Pauli ran to her side. . . . "Dear Mitzi," she said, appealingly.

Mitzi conquered her emotion with a tremendous effort and smiled, with shaking lips.

"What an idiot I am!" she said to Bruce. "But I didn't expect—still, I've been preparing for this ever since your last letter."

"The play's sold for England!" Pauli told her triumphantly.

Mitzi dried her eyes with a coarse, big handkerchief.

"That's splendid!" she said, sincerely; and turned to Bruce with an explanation, "We haven't seen it yet.

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Pauli asked us of course, but Fritz . . ." She flushed and added hastily, "I didn't want to go without him, but we shall later." She bit her lip. Again she had said too little and too much. In desperation she changed the subject. "Well, that is— Oh, Bruce, I owe you a grudge!"

He smiled.

"After all these years? Not the drubbing I gave Fritz?"

"No; the drum you gave Kurt. When things were so—bad, we locked it in the closet, but at the first word from you, out it came. There are five children in there now—and one drum!"

Pauli nodded, her hands to her ears in mock horror.

"I heard them!" she said.

"They're forming a company," Mitzi went on. "Kurt is the Captain and . . . oh, I must be going!"

Pauli said, swiftly:

"He's all right, surely."

"Oh, yes," Mitzi agreed. "I told them they'd have to march straight out into the street. No one could stand that din at such close quarters. No; it's not that."

After a moment Pauli asked, simply:

"Fritz?"

Mitzi nodded. Her little face was inexpressibly sad, resigned; yet with a curious sort of fighting resignation, an expression that was purest paradox; as if she said, "This sorrow is inevitable . . . I must endure it; but I will fight it, every moment."

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Now, she said:

"Yes. They sent from the office."

Bruce was bewildered, a little. But Pauli had told him enough to help him to an explanation. He said quietly, his face changing from good-humored welcome to that of the physican, the healer:

"Shall I go? I've had some experience——"

But Mitzi shook her head.

"Thanks, no. We're past all that. I'm the only one who can do anything. I talk to him quietly and we walk outdoors." She turned her shoulder to Pauli, who busied herself with hooks and eyes. Pauli's glance at Bruce, behind Mitzi's frail back, told volumes. Bruce felt a lump in his throat. He fancied that he was quite inured to the misery of war and war's aftermath. But somehow . . . little Mitzi! He remembered her so well, gay and young and vivacious; and Fritz . . . hot-headed, self-confident Fritz. Under his breath he murmured, "This is—*rotten.*"

Mitzi turned away.

"Pauli, will you keep an eye on Kurt?"

"Of course, dear."

"I asked him to come in before dark," Mitzi explained. "But—they're playing 'war with France.'" She sighed, heavily, "You see, they've told him at school that Germany must get back Alsace-Lorraine."

The bell rang and Pauli moved toward the door in mild astonishment.

"Who can that be?" she asked, rhetorically.

She opened the door and Fritz Winckleman came in.

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Bruce started perceptibly at the sight of him, yet he had thought himself prepared, not only by Pauli's description, but by what he himself had seen of war-broken men at home. Still—could it be Fritz? This haggard and rebellious man, calm with a forced placidity. Bruce thought of sleeping volcanoes. He knew that look of supressed, masked violence.

Mitzi ran forward.

"Oh, what is it?" she asked, anxiously.

Fritz smiled, dangerously.

"I've lost my job!" he announced with a gayety entirely assumed and entirely hideous.

Mitzi said nothing. She was white but serene. Bruce felt his heart go out to her. A sports-woman, Mitzi, game as they come.

Pauli said, "Oh . . ." on a tender, troubled note.

"Funny, isn't it?" asked Fritz rapidly. "I helped make the war and I helped fight it and now—" He seemed to see Bruce for the first time, grew instantly suspicious, excited and a little shrinking. His voice rose out of control. "Who's that?" he demanded, sharply.

Mitzi said, quietly:

"You know, dear, Bruce Gordon."

"He came last night," Pauli added.

Bruce came forward, his steady eyes on the flickering ones, his hand out.

"No ill will, Fritz?"

Fritz was still staring. He asked:

"Ill will. Why?"

"I'm English," said Bruce.

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Fritz took the hand and held it, hard. Bruce could feel the rapid beat of blood, the hot dryness of the palm and fingers.

Fritz said, indifferently enough, yet smolderingly:

"It isn't the English who are our enemy."

Mitzi took her husband's arm.

"Fritz, dear, can you tell us . . . quietly . . . what happened?"

"Oh, very quietly," he promised. "They never wanted us . . . the men who'd been away . . . but they gave us little jobs. And yesterday I slipped up on a story . . ." His rigid, unnatural control slipped and his voice rose. "And to-day, the boss sent for me. He's made money, the boss, with all the exciting things to be printed . . . And he said, 'Winckleman . . .'"

"Quiet, my darling," pleaded Mitzi.

" 'Winckleman,' he said, 'you fellows are no good!' "

"No!" exclaimed Pauli, her eyes bright with anger.

" 'We were great,' I said, 'while there was fighting to be done.' 'Yes,' he answered, 'but now the war's over. You can't live forever on being a hero. What I need is live men, and I can get 'em cheap. Boys whose fathers have got money!' "

"Fritz!" implored Mitzi, stroking his arm.

" 'Where did they get it?' " said I. " 'Who cares?' said he. 'The important thing is they've got it.' 'To *you*,' I said. 'To everybody! Sentiment's fine, but business is business and gold coin buys more than medals,' he told me."

Pauli's lips set. She said, in a tone unlike anything

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Bruce had ever heard from her, "The blackguard!" And his own verdict of condemnation, "the low scoundrel!" came simultaneously with hers.

Fritz looked from one to the other. Hectic spots of color burned in his face. He went on eagerly:

"That's what I said! 'You swine!' I said. 'Me?' said he. 'The world!' said he. 'When it comes to honor stand on the street and watch who gets it, the cripple on his wheeled platform, or the profiteer in his car!' "

"That's not true!" Mitzi broke in, indignantly.

Bruce Gordon shuddered. He remarked, low, tremulous:

"It's . . . *beastly!*"

Pauli spoke out, firmly.

"There's only contempt for men who made money that way!"

" 'Watch and see!' he said," Fritz repeated, clenching and unclenching his hands. " 'Watch and see!' "

Jan entered the dining room with a tray and a great, cheerful clatter of cups and saucers.

Mitzi laid her cheek to her husband's arm.

"Anyhow—" she began, comfortingly, and Pauli broke in.

"We're going to have coffee!" she announced. *"Five,* Jan. I don't know what's happened to father! Come, Bruce. Mitzi. Fritz . . . a cup of coffee will do you good!"

"Oh, yes!" Fritz agreed, childishly eager, and hurried ahead of the others into the dining room. The professor came in at that moment, laden with bundles.

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He turned as if to speak to some one in back of him.

"What have you got?" laughed Pauli going to him. She stopped. Behrend stood in back of her father, the mourning band on the sleeve of his light overcoat very broad and very black.

"I met August," explained Arndt, unnecessarily, and trying hard to infuse cordiality into his tone.

Behrend came into the room, bulking very large. He laid his hand on Pauli's shoulder and said, affectionately:

"So I asked myself to your party."

She smiled, a little distractedly, and called out to Jan, "*Six* cups, Jan!"

"I was getting out of my car at a wine shop," her father-in-law told her, "and I've brought a bottle of Karlowitzer. Leopold has it. For to-day you drink my health! We've something to celebrate! Something I've done myself!"

Pauli said, the irony unintentional:

"No?"

"What is it?" asked Arndt, putting down some of his precious packages.

Behrend swelled, visibly, like the frog in the fairy tale. Bruce, watching him unseen, from the background, thought, amusedly, "He *must* burst. . . ." Behrend went on:

"I waited to tell you together. Look!" With a gesture not far short of superb he threw back his overcoat; stood there, smiling, complacent, rubbing his hands together.

Pauli looked, vaguely.

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"I don't see—" she began. "But Behrend raised a majestic hand and pointed to his broad chest,

"My decoration! . . . Two hours ago. . . . In the presence of all my workmen. The highest honor . . . for service, *in the war!*"

They were smitten into silence, dumfounded. Arndt roused himself with an effort, avoiding Pauli's eyes. He remarked, helplessly:

"Really——"

But his attempt at conversation was interrupted. Fritz had come quietly to the dining-room doorway. He laughed, now, a neighing, inhuman sound, sustained and maniacal.

Behrend whirled about, startled.

"Who's that?"

Mitzi came up to Fritz, stood close to him, her hand on his arm, speaking his name, softly, steadyingly. Bruce, detaching himself from the background, moved closer, spoke in the doctor's soothing tone, "See here, old man."

"I see!" answered Fritz grimly. He broke away from their detaining hands and advanced close to Behrend, staring fixedly at the decoration.

"What's wrong?" asked Behrend, uneasily.

"Nothing's wrong," Fritz assured him. "I've lost my job. Will you give me another?"

Mitzi had followed her husband. She said, pleadingly:

"Dear, Mr. Behrend doesn't——"

"I don't employ people," answered Behrend, relieved.

"But you spoke of your workmen!" Fritz persisted.

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"Trained men. You're not fit."

"I was fit to pull your chestnuts out of the fire!" argued Fritz, his eyes gleaming.

Behrend drew back.

"You're crazy!" he said shortly, with conviction.

"And you're rich!" Fritz accused. "Do I get a job?"

"No!" snapped Behrend, seriously irritated. To have his triumph spoiled by a futile scene like this, his dignity threatened, his exploits minimized!

Fritz's right hand stole into his pocket. He spoke slowly, giving each word its value.

"I'm fired, and you're decorated!" he said, loudly. The hand in the pocket pointed, holding something. "Not much!" vowed Fritz.

"He's got a pistol!" screamed Behrend, in a panic; and Bruce came close to the man with the hidden menace.

"Steady!" warned Bruce, very gently, but resolutely.

Mitzi spoke:

"No! Fritz!"

Winckleman gestured them all away with his bent shoulders.

"Keep off!" he ordered, dangerously.

Behrend shook. He asked through whitened lips:

"You'd murder me?"

"Why not?" Fritz asked him. "You taught me the trade! Every day I killed men! Every night I killed them again! You get the profit and I want to be paid!"

The cloaked hand flourished. Bruce crept nearer

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in one swift movement and, just as Behrend, his nerves absolutely gone, shouted, "Grab him!" the Englishman seized Fritz's hidden hand firmly and pulled it out of the pocket.

The thin hand was clutched upon . . . a crust of bread!

Bruce's fingers were numbing the shaking hand. The symbolic crust dropped to the floor.

Fritz Winckleman began to laugh, unrestrainedly, hysterically, wildly.

"Nothing but a crust, you coward!" he cried. "I've given you one moment of what we faced for years . . . and you've given me the laugh of my life. 'Watch and see!' I see . . . you and your decoration. He laughed again, his voice growing hoarse. "If I could tell the hungry women!" he said, writhing with the dreadful merriment.

Mitzi's eyes had filled, but her voice was steady:

"Come, Fritz!" she bade him.

She took his arm, led him toward the door.

"If I could tell the homeless people in the ruined villages!" Fritz continued, choking.

"Come, my dear," she urged him gently.

"People who don't know yet what it was all about!" he went on, over her reiterated pleading of "Come, come."

"If I could tell the dead!" he shouted, his voice peaking to a mad climax.

He shrieked with laughter.

Bruce approached Mitzi, and offered:

"I'll go with you."

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She shook her head,

"It's all right. Come, Fritz. He's been like this before," she explained, low. "It'll wear off outdoors."

The shocking sound of laughter lessened.

Arndt moved forward. He had been a tense and absolutely silent spectator of the scene. Now he said to Mitzi:

"Let me. I'll go."

"It's all right," she repeated, at the door . . . "Just keep an eye on Kurt. Come, Fritz. . . ." Her voice broke with tenderness, with the passionate love she felt for this shattered man, a love deeper, more stable, wider and more amazingly single-hearted than that which she had known for the well, sane man she had married. "We've got each other," she reminded him, forgetting the presence of the others. "Nothing else matters——"

The madness died from his eyes and face. The laughter was slain in his throat. He sobbed, with reaction, with self-pity, with love for the woman who took him in her arms, simply, devotedly, before them all.

"Come, my dear one," said Mitzi so poignantly that Arndt drew his hand across his old eyes and Bruce turned away to hide an overwhelming emotion.

Pauli, wet-eyed, closed the door after the husband and wife. She said, shaken:

"Ah—poor Fritz!"

Behrend alone withstood the tide. Genuinely outraged, still tremulous from what he had believed to be his immediate danger, he began stormily:

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"Well—*really*——"

"Poor Mitzi," added Pauli, unheeding.

Behrend touched his decoration caressingly.

"My decoration . . . it cost me something, I can tell you."

"It cost him something!" Bruce reminded him somberly.

Behrend seemed to notice the Englishman for the first time, personally. He remarked, loftily:

"Ah! Gordon!" and continued with his grievance. "But to blame me! However, of course he's not responsible," he admitted, feeling better now that the intruder had gone and the air was cleared of peril and misery and madness. "I—I—I'll give him money!" promised Behrend, heavily.

Pauli looked her gratitude. Anything for Fritz! She said:

"That's kind of you."

Arndt found a plate in the dining room and returned to pile the cakes upon it. Pauli beckoned Jan, and Arndt said, with as cheerful an air as he could muster:

"And now—every one—coffee!"

Behrend sat down, exclaiming:

"I couldn't eat a mouthful!"

Pauli held the plate to him.

"They're very nice!" she tempted.

"Well, just *one*, then," Behrend said, taking three. "I am entirely unnerved. Open the wine." As Bruce picked up the bottle and gave it to Jan, Behrend continued, solemnly, "What do you think they ask for a dozen Karlowitzer? Two million crowns! *Two mil-*

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lion! And our taxes! Outrageous! Life grows very hard. *I* blame the Kaiser!"

"Who is quite comfortable in Holland," observed the professor.

"Germany is our natural enemy!" lectured Behrend. "And France, with her ambition to rule the world! Our natural allies are England and America. Unless England *fights* America!"

Bruce shook his head.

"What? The same race!"

"Race counts for nothing!" Behrend instructed him. The important thing is trade interests. Look at the advantage taken by the Americans."

"That's true!" Bruce agreed, impressed.

"A money-grubbing people who grow rich on our sufferings," Behrend went on, as coffee was served. "England and Austria together could whip the world!"

"I heard a music-hall song about America last week in London," Bruce told them. "However—" he broke off, shrugged his broad shoulders and smiled at Pauli who was passing him.

"There is already talk of reducing armaments," proffered Arndt, satirically. "And, the peace conference——"

"War always begins with the peace conferences," remarked Behrend, unconscious of quoting.

"The treaty was signed yesterday," said Bruce.

"A treaty with conflict in every clause," Behrend argued. "And you prattle of nonresistance!"

"I don't!" contradicted the professor.

Behrend almost dropped his cup.

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"What!"

"I believe in fighting to the last ditch when you're attacked! I believe in being prepared while there is any possibility of war! But, I believe in destroying that possibility!"

"Through Leagues and World Courts?" asked Behrend, interested and skeptical.

"Through education!" answered Arndt, his eyes shining with the gallant and undefeated spirit of humanity that was his. "Peace is not in parchments, but in the heart and the brain. We must refute the teaching of centuries, that rage and murder are brave and glorious. We must show that brag is as contemptible in nations as in men, and learn to be ashamed of a dishonest fatherland as we are of a dishonest father!"

A little silence followed. Then Behrend spoke:

"There will always be war!"

Pauli leaned forward in her chair. Before she could speak Behrend had gone on:

"And the men who fight will be our best and bravest."

Arndt nodded.

"That's what makes it so terrible," he said, sorrowfully.

"We must have great armies!" Behrend persisted.

"The one and only thing accomplished by this struggle," remarked Arndt, "is that the nation with the greatest army was beaten!"

Behrend flushed with his easy rage.

"The one and only——?"

"What else?" Arndt asked him, calmly. "Yester-

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day, the peace treaty! Five years ago yesterday a schoolboy shot our Archduke! Because of that the whole world has poured forth blood and treasure."

"We didn't fight for the Archduke!" countered Behrend.

"What *did* we fight for?" inquired Arndt gravely.

"For ideals! For culture!"

The professor lifted his fine head. His voice rang out, bugle clear:

"For culture! Ten million lives! Two hundred billion dollars! For that sum the world could have been cured and taught. What might not have been done for art, science, humanity? Instead, we have achieved ruin, riot, revolution, famine, anarchy and hatred! A war for power has left exhaustion! A war for democracy has established ignorance and vulgarity! Dethroned kings and set up a populace even less wise and more violent! A war to end war . . . and already we prepare to fight again! For what? In a single century England alone has fought eighty wars! No one remembers what they were about and no one can say what they have accomplished."

Pauli got to her feet and took the opened wine and a glass to Behrend. He said, modestly, "Just a drop"; and, carefully, brimmed his glass.

"Five years ago," pursued Arndt, "I asked you all the cause of the war. Do you know, now?"

Bruce looked up.

"I don't!" he admitted honestly.

Behrend started, spilling a little of the precious Karlowitzer.

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"And you a soldier?" he accused, outraged again, "You fought——"

"Four years," Bruce finished for him. "And I don't know what for!"

"Shall I tell you?" Arndt asked him. "England would not see her supremacy threatened. That's Arrogance!" He waited for Bruce to absorb this information; saw him start to speak, more puzzled than resentful, and went on with a finger uplifted for silence: "Every nation—except America—wanted trade and territory. That's Greed! Many of us had taken it. Robbery! We were tied up in secret engagements. Intrigue! We supported enormous armies, whose existence was an excitement, who wasted our substance and lowered our productivity, officered by thousands with whom fighting was a life profession, and their only chance of advancement."

He spoke quietly enough, but the man's entire soul his credo, his vision, shone through the words. Pauli felt something of his inspiration descend on her. She said, clearly:

"Selfish ambition——"

"Other races prospered," her father went on. "Envy! And we were the greatest. Vanity! And, above all—ignorance . . . vast, universal ignorance . . . and atavistic barbarism . . . and tribe instinct . . . all so easily fanned into fury . . . suspicion . . . distrust . . . hatred . . . and the lust to kill!"

Bruce said, appalled:

"God!"

"Arrogance, Jealousy, Greed, Vanity," enumerated

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Arndt. "Not such pretty phrases as 'Ideals' and 'Honor,' but the real reason for the cheering and blood-thirsty crowds in London and Paris and Berlin and Vienna . . . for widowed women and starved children . . . for world-wide chaos, bankruptcy and desolation!"

Behrend lumbered to his feet. He was obstinate still and undefeated.

"You think there should be no nations?" he challenged.

"I think there should be no aliens!" responded the professor.

"Even then," Behrend argued, "we should go on fighting one another. There would still be individual hatreds, class hatreds, religious hatreds, racial and industrial. It is the law of life!"

As his impressive voice ceased a sound reached the group through the open windows. It came from the courtyard and resolved itself into the little, high voices of children, giving, sharply, the military commands. Pauli turned, abruptly.

"The law of the jungle!" Arndt answered Behrend.

"There will always be war!" repeated Behrend, stubbornly; and, advancing to the table whereon stood the bottle of wine, he refilled his glass. From the courtyard a boy's voice rose: *"Fall in! Attention!"* it cried out. Pauli rose and went over to the window. Bruce's eyes followed her, they always followed her.

"Next time," said Behrend, raising his glass as the unseen boy commanded, *"Right Dress!"* "Next time, God give us—victory!"

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CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

THERE was a heavy silence in the room as Behrend drank his toast—alone. Setting down the glass he had drained, he rose to his feet.

"I must be going," he told them, and then crossed directly to Pauli.

"You need nothing?" he asked her paternally.

Her father answered for her.

"No thank you," he said.

Pauli, her mind occupied with the playing children, asked:

"You know, don't you—Carl's play has been sold for England?"

"Yes," Behrend answered, emotionally. "My boy! A great author! I always said I should be proud of my son. Well—" His voice trailed off irresolutely; he took up his overcoat and started for the door. But Pauli checked him before he had reached it:

"And, the people across the hall?"

Behrend dug into his pocket, producing a thick roll of paper money.

"Ah, yes," he remembered. "Our bravest and best——"

Here he paused to smile complacently at the phrase so neatly turned, in his estimation, and grew mel-

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low with a satisfaction that counseled generosity.

"Give them—" He considered gravely, and then, peeling off two notes, handed them to the professor. "Give them *two million crowns!*" he commanded, impressively.

Two million crowns! The price of a dozen bottles of Karlowitzer.

"Good-by, Pauli," Behrend went on; and as she looked up at him, her lips framing her accustomed form of address, he pinched her cheek and reminded her again, "Call me—father!"

Pauli went back to the window, an odd little smile touching her mouth to humor. Behrend waved his well-cared-for hand at the others.

"Good-by, Gordon! Next time you and I will be fighting—shoulder to shoulder."

Arndt held the door wide for the departing guest; and as Behrend made his farewells to him the professor, recollecting something, followed him out into the hall.

"August," they heard him saying; "if you could find work for the boy——"

His voice, Behrend's hasty answer, died to a murmur. Pauli still stood there by the window, intent. She clutched at the desk with her work-scarred fingers and stared, tense, infinitely distressed.

Bruce came close to her.

"What is it, Pauli?" he asked anxiously, quick and sensitive to feel all her changing moods and mirror them.

"The children playing soldier."

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"Can you see them across the courtyard?" Bruce asked, purposely matter-of-fact.

"I can see beyond that," she told him, gravely.

"How do you mean?"

"With Carl's play—into a new day."

"A new day!" Bruce repeated, hopelessly. "World-wide chaos and—the next generation—*drilling!*"

"Yes," she told him, "the next generation and perhaps the next. But oh! Bruce, my dear, time isn't measured by our little lives. All this can't have been for nothing. There's a new spirit in the world, a new rebellion. Ten million dead, for every man a wife or a mother crying, 'No more war!' Millions more who saw and suffered, crying, 'No more war!' And from those millions, millions yet to come, always wiser and kinder, until the whole world sees and understands and cries, 'No more hate! No more prejudice! *No More War!*'"

From the courtyard, from across the hall, came the somber roll of drums. Arndt, entering quietly, closed the door behind him, in perhaps defiance of the drums; and, coming to Pauli, stood beside her, his eyes very grave, as he said, deeply:

"God give us tolerance!"

"God give us Love!" Bruce added, his voice shaken with emotion.

Pauli's voice was lifted. It rang out, clear, trusting, hoping:

"God give us peace!" she cried.

The drums muttered sullenly. Swelled. But Pauli

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had ceased to hear them. As the two men who loved her watched her, in silence and in awe she stood there, erect, unsupported, her inspired eyes, her lifted, exalted face looking past them, past the playing children, past to-morrow into the dawn of a new day.

THE END

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Every man will recognize in the character of George Babbitt something of himself. He was a booster and a joiner, but behind all of his activities was a wistful wonder as to what life holds.

MAIN STREET

Carol Kennicott's attempt to bring life and culture to Gopher Prairie and Gopher Prairie's reaction toward her teachings have made this book one of the most famous of the last decade.

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